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Baynard, Sally Ann

SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY UNDER NIMEIRI, 1969-1982

The George Washington University

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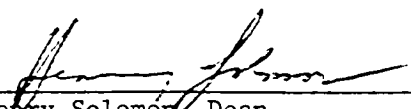


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I hereby certify that Sally Ann Baynard has passed the Final Examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on April 15, 1983 and that this is the final and approved form of the dissertation.


Henry Solomon, Dean

Dissertation Research Committee:

Dr. Bernard Reich	Director
Dr. Burton Malcolm Sapin	Reader
Dr. Benjamin Nimer	Reader

SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY UNDER NIMEIRI, 1969-1982

By

Sally Ann Baynard
B.A. February 1970, The George Washington University

A Dissertation submitted to

The Faculty of

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Dissertation directed by
Bernard Reich
Professor of Political Science and International Affairs

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION, CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND SOURCES OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

Little scholarly attention has been devoted to Sudanese foreign policy, despite the Sudan's strategic position in northeast Africa and its potential significance as one of the few developing countries with abundant agricultural resources. Several articles, and parts of books, have treated aspects or periods of the Sudan's foreign policy, but there has been no systematic attempt to describe and analyse it.

A few articles published some years ago provide information on Sudanese foreign policy. For the most part these are general overviews or expositions of both foreign and domestic policy, therefore providing relatively little specific insight on foreign policy. Tareq Ismael's 1970 article, "The Sudan's Foreign Policy Today" is a brief overview.¹ Peter Bechtold's 1975 article, "Military Rule in the Sudan: The First Five Years of Ja'far Numayri," provides an interesting interim report on Sudanese politics after May 1969, but gives more attention to domestic than foreign politics.² One of the most useful articles on Sudanese foreign policy in the pre-1969 period is a 1969 article by John Howell and Mohamed Beshir Hamid, "Sudan and

¹ Tareq Ismael, "The Sudan's Foreign Policy Today," International Journal, vol. XXV, no. 3, Summer 1970, pp. 565-575.

² Peter K. Bechtold, "Military Rule in the Sudan: The First Five Years of Ja'far Numayri," The Middle East Journal, volume 29, No. 1, Winter 1975, pp. 16-32.

the Outside World, 1964-1968."³ The authors give close scrutiny both to the foreign policy of 1964-1969 and to the domestic setting of foreign policy-making, providing the best introduction to the foreign policy of the post-1969 period.

More recent work includes Percy Allum's 1979 article, "The Sudan: Numeiry's Ten Years of Power," and Robert Cornevin's 1978 article, "La Politique Exterieur du Soudan."⁴ Allum's work is a perceptive reflection on Sudanese domestic politics, but with few direct references to foreign policy. It does provide, however, a useful background sketch of domestic politics since 1969. The article by Cornevin is a very general summary of foreign and domestic policies since 1979, and is of interest only for a brief section on Franco-Sudanese relations since 1969.

There are two articles, one paper and one book -- all relatively recent -- which are particularly germane to a study of Sudanese foreign policy since 1969. Mohamed Beshir Hamid's "Aspects of Sudanese Foreign Policy: 'Splendid Isolation,' Radicalization, and 'Finlandization,'" compares and contrasts the foreign policy of the Abboud government (1958-1964), the transitional governments

³ John Howell and M. Beshir Hamid, "Sudan and the Outside World, 1964-1968," African Affairs, vol. 68, no. 273, October 1969, pp. 299-315.

⁴ Percy Allum, "The Sudan: Numeiry's Ten Years of Power," Contemporary Review, vol. 235, no. 1366, pp. 233-242. Robert Cornevin, "La Politique Exterieur du Soudan," Revue Francaise d'Etudes Politiques Africaines, October 1978, pp. 60-84.

(1964-1965) and the post-1969 government.⁵ He provides insight into key issues of the foreign policies of these periods in a very compact form. A second piece of research by the same author is "The 'Finlandization' of Sudan's Foreign Policy: Sudanese-Egyptian Relations Since the Camp David Accords."⁶ The author provides a perceptive analysis of Sudanese-Egyptian relations within the context of inter-Arab relations and Sudanese domestic politics and reveals a sensitive grasp of the nuances of each. Following a detailed assessment of relations between the Sudan and Egypt since the Camp David accords, he concludes:

the interests and the security of the Sudanese regime have, in effect, become irrevocably tied to Egypt in such a way that Sudan can no longer afford to take a foreign policy position which is actually hostile to Egypt.⁷

In a 1979 article, "The Sudan: Domestic Politics and Foreign Relations Under Nimeiry," Dunstan Wai provides an overview of the link between domestic politics and foreign policy since 1969.⁸ Wai provides a general analysis of the relationship of domestic and foreign politics since 1969, concluding:

Under President Nimeiry, the Sudan's foreign policy has been distinguished by: changing political alliances with ideological groupings in Khartoum, absence of a substantive

⁵ Muhammad Beshir Hamid, "Aspects of Sudanese Foreign Policy: 'Splendid Isolation,' Radicalization and 'Finlandization,'" a paper presented to the Fourth International Conference on the Nile Valley: 'Continuity and Change', Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, November 24-28, 1981.

⁶ Muhammad Beshir Hamid, "The 'Finlandization' of Sudan's Foreign Policy: Sudanese-Egyptian Relations Since the Camp David Accords," September 1981, forthcoming in Journal of Arab Studies.

⁷ Mohammed Beshir Hamid, p. 3.

⁸ Dunstan M. Wai, "The Sudan: Foreign Politics and Foreign Relations under Nimeiry," African Affairs, July, 1979, pp. 297-317.

internal ideology, national priorities such as reconciliation with the Southern Region, pressing developmental needs, and external constraints.'

Despite the accuracy of the general overview, however, the usefulness of the article for understanding Sudanese foreign policy is limited by the brevity of the format for so massive a topic, and by the author's inaccurate characterization of major elements of Sudanese politics.¹⁰

Peter K. Bechtold's detailed study of modern Sudanese politics, The Politics in the Sudan: Parliamentary and Military Rule in an Emerging African Nation, is the best single source of information on the parliamentary periods of 1956-1958 and 1964-1969, particularly his unique study of the four Sudanese parliamentary elections since independence.¹¹ The book also provides an interesting look at the Sudanese political culture as a whole, and includes a brief survey of Sudanese foreign policy. Although indispensable as a reference, Bechtold's study is clearly not designed to explore Sudanese foreign policy at any length or in any detail.

This research is an attempt to describe and explain Sudanese foreign policy since 1969 within the framework of domestic politics and with detailed attention to the process by which foreign policy

⁹ Dunstan M. Wai, p. 316.

¹⁰ An example is his statement, "The abandonment of the policy of an Arab Federation with Libya and Egypt, and the conclusion of peace with the Southern Region infuriated the Pan-Arabists and led to the subsequent resignations of Vice President Babikir Awadallah and Khalid Hassan Abbas, and of Secretary-General of the SSU, Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid." (p. 306). None of the three persons mentioned attributes their resignations to anything connected with the Tripoli Charter or the Addis Ababa accord.

¹¹ Peter K. Bechtold, The Politics in the Sudan; Parliamentary and Military Rule in an Emerging African Nation, (New York: Praeger, 1976)

since 1969 has been made. It is hoped that an analysis which brings together a chronicle of events and public statements, on the one hand, with interview data from those most intimately involved in the decision-making process, on the other hand, will not only fill a gap in the literature, but also provide a starting point for more detailed study of other aspects of contemporary Sudanese foreign policy.

CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH, AND SOURCES OF DATA

This research is grounded in the now-common view of policy as the result of decisions based on policy-makers' perceptions of various internal and external variables (including the effect of past decisions), which in turn is colored by their own backgrounds and attitudes. Foreign policy is here defined as the actions or statements in regard to foreign affairs made on behalf of the state by authorized persons. Persons authorized to speak on behalf of the state include, in this study, the head of state (whether the President or members of the collective executive, the Revolutionary Command Council), Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Ministers of State for Foreign Affairs, Ministers of Information, and on exceptional occasions, other diplomatic officials who issue statements clearly on behalf of the Foreign Ministry. In rare cases, conspicuous inaction is a manifestation of foreign policy.

Decision-makers are defined as persons with the authority to make decisions on behalf of the state and with the power to make such decisions binding upon the state. This definition excludes advisors who may influence the decision-maker but whose consent is not

necessary for a decision to be made. Deciding whether a person is an influential advisor or a decision-maker is not always easy in a relatively uninstitutionalized system like the Sudan, and can only be done case by case on the basis of a consensus of close observers or participants in the decision-making process. For instance, when Foreign Minister between 1971 and 1975, Mansour Khalid was universally viewed by political insiders as a decision-maker in foreign policy, with his power to make decisions resulting from his decisive influence over the President. Although he became Foreign Minister again briefly in 1977, his influence over the President had waned to the extent that his consent was no longer necessary for foreign policy decisions to be made.

Similarly, the members of the RCC were foreign policy decision-makers in the May 1969 - July 1971 period, but not in subsequent years. After the dissolution of the RCC in October 1971, none of its former members except the President was in a position authorized to make foreign policy decisions, and in none of them, even the one RCC member whom Nimeiri retained in the government until 1979, did he vest the power to make such decisions. There is also no evidence to suggest that any of the Foreign Ministers after the dismissal of Mansour Khalid in 1975 were granted by the President the power to make binding decisions in foreign policy.

Throughout this study the term, "the Sudan" is frequently used -- as in common parlance -- to denote the government of the Sudan, as in "the Sudan responded" or "the policy of the Sudan." When, after 1975/76, the Sudan became a nation of unalloyed one-man rule, "the

Sudan" came to mean President Jaafar Mohamed Nimeiri, as is pointed out in Chapter Five.

Although this analysis is based on the approach to foreign policy analysis suggested some years ago by the decision-making school, it does not rely upon some of the sophisticated techniques of foreign policy analysis which have been developed since then. Formal and methodologically-sophisticated approaches may be appropriate for highly institutionalized systems, but not for personalized systems like the Sudan. Rosenau has suggested that the essence of scientific inquiry lies not so much in the choice of a particular methodology but in the automatic tendency to ask "of what larger pattern is this behavior an instance?"¹² In this sense, this research is a scientific, though not a quantitative, analysis.

As it was not possible to undertake a description and analysis of all of Sudanese foreign policy since independence, and since policy prior to the coup d'etat of May 1969 has been treated to some degree in the literature, it was decided to limit this study to the period since the present government came to power in May 1969. This period of approximately thirteen years has been divided into three phases: May 1969 - July 1971, July 1971 - July 1976, and July 1976 - July 1982.

The first period -- which is treated in Chapter Two -- begins with the coup d'etat of May 25, 1969 and ends with the failed coup d'etat against Nimeiri and his colleagues of July 19-21, 1971.

¹² James N. Rosenau, The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy, Revised and Enlarged Edition, (New York: Nichols Publishing Company, 1980), p. 42.

Chapter Three begins with the July 1971 coup which marked the beginning of a new era of Sudanese foreign policy. The conceptual basis of foreign policy-making changed from a "socialist," pan-Arabist and anti-imperialist ideology to pragmatic concerns for resolution of the Sudanese civil war and economic development, and the Sudan turned away from exclusive reliance on the Soviet bloc, renewed its ties with the West, and settled into a position between the two superpowers, though leaning toward the West.

Chapter Four is concerned with the July 1976 through July 1982 period. Another failed attempt to overthrow the Nimeiri government occurred on July 2, 1976, this time by a combination of forces within the Sudan and Sudanese fighters trained and brought in from Libya. Like the July 1971 coup, this attempt ushered in a new period in Sudanese foreign policy as the conceptual basis of the regime appeared to shift to the imperiled nature of the regime itself, dependence upon Egypt for security increased immediately, and policy toward the superpowers shifted toward complete reliance on the United States and overt wariness of the USSR. The end point of this period, July 1982, does not mark any change in Sudanese foreign policy, which appears since then to have continued in the same pattern as before, but merely the end point of this study.

In Chapter Five patterns of Sudanese foreign policy are outlined. Conclusions relevant to the foreign policies of other developing countries are suggested.

The chronicle of events is based largely on such published sources as Arab Report and Record, daily newspapers such as the New York

Times, and Sudanese and other foreign broadcasts and newspaper articles translated and published by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). The attitudes of decision-makers, accounts of a number of unpublicized events, and in some cases an analysis of an event or statement are based on interviews carried out during research in the Sudan from March to November 1981.¹³

An effort was made to interview all persons who were involved in the foreign policy decision-making process since 1969 (and a number from before 1969), plus persons who were close to the process, or who were involved in the implementation of foreign policy. This included all surviving members of the Revolutionary Command Council, seven former (plus the current) Ministers of Foreign Affairs, numerous cabinet ministers, and twenty officials of the Foreign Ministry (primarily Ambassadors and Heads of Departments). According to Sudanese law, Foreign Ministry officials below the level of Foreign Minister and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs are not permitted to give on-the-record interviews without prior clearance from the Ministry. The wealth of information provided, therefore, during interviews with these officials can only be attributed to "an official of the Foreign Ministry", although in every case the official cited was close to the matter in question, whether as ambassador to the country involved or head of the appropriate department.

Most of the interviews covered sensitive political issues and the confidentiality of the responses to delicate questions was preserved by not citing individuals in such cases, but by attributing the

¹³ A list of persons interviewed is provided in the appendix.

information instead to "a member" or "members" of the RCC, for example, or "a former intelligence official." This was done to avoid any possible embarrassment to the past and present government officials who contributed generously and candidly to this research.

There are always limitations and errors involved in depending upon human memory for recall of past (and sensitive) political events. There will invariably be errors resulting from a desire on the part of persons interviewed to reinterpret past events with the benefit of hindsight, or to present historical events to the interviewer in the most attractive light. Such problems are undoubtedly magnified when so many of the persons interviewed are former participants in the decision-making process whose tenure in office ended in disagreement with the regime still in power. Such errors were avoided to some extent in this study by interviewing as many as possible of the persons involved in -- and close to -- the decision-making process and using only corroborated information as authoritative. Data on controversial points was considered authoritative only when it was corroborated by at least two persons whose political or personal differences make it unlikely that they would agree on an erroneous reconstruction of events. No statement by an interviewee was accepted at face-value without corroboration by other sources, whether persons or documents. The only exception to this is where an individual's statement is used to illustrate his own attitude or personal belief: such statements do not require corroboration.

When names of individuals are mentioned in this research, they are identified by the the rank and/or post which they held at the time

relevant to the context in which they are mentioned, despite the fact that they may have held other significant posts at other times.

Individuals' full names are also used, although this is sometimes awkward, because in the Sudan there is virtually no use of family names. A person is identified by his or her given name, followed by the given name of his or her father, and then that of the paternal grandfather.

CHAPTER TWO: SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY, MAY 1969 THROUGH JULY 1971

INTRODUCTION

On May 25, 1969 the parliamentary government of Mohamed Ahmad Mahgoub was overthrown by a group of young army officers who took over the institutions of government without bloodshed and with no overt opposition. All six of the officers involved in carrying out the coup d'etat were members of the executive committee of the Free Officers' organization, a semi-secret group which had existed in some form since 1957.¹⁴ By a majority of only one vote during a meeting in the first week of May 1969, the full executive committee of the Free Officers' organization had voted not to move on May 14, 1969 with the coup which it had been planning in detail for at least six months.¹⁵ The six officers who had voted in favor of going ahead with the May 14 coup left the meeting determined to move on their own without telling the others because they felt the present opportunity would not recur for a long time.¹⁶ They were convinced that the time was ripe for action because the reconciliation between the two wings of the Umma party raised doubts in their minds about an imminent Umma/Ansar dominated

¹⁴ Interview with members of the Free Officers' executive committee.

¹⁵ Interviews with members of the RCC and with former Free Officers' executive committee member Salah Abdel Aal Mabrouk.

¹⁶ Information in this and subsequent paragraphs concerning the background to the coup of May 1969 is based on interviews with members of the RCC, except where noted.

government (whether by elections or military intervention by Ansar officers) and because the armored corps troops of Major Khalid Hassan Abbas, one of the conspirators, were on their annual training maneuvers at Khoromer, just outside Khartoum. Changing the date of the coup to May 24/25, the six officers told no one outside their own commands except for Former Chief Justice Babikir Awadallah, who had been the leader of the Professional Front in the October 1964 Revolution, had been contacted by some officers as early as 1965, and had been brought into the meetings of the Free Officers' executive committee to help them evaluate political and economic circumstances surrounding their planned coup d'etat.

During the months prior to the coup names of potential cabinet members had been discussed within the whole executive committee, but particularly between Babikir Awadallah and Maj. Farouk Osman Hamadallah, who was out of the army at that time. A number of names had been discussed by the committee for the post of Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) Chairman. At one point the group had almost been in agreement on Babikir Awadallah, but some officers insisted that the Chairman be an officer. At another point a leader had been selected who had ties to the NUP (to forestall immediate opposition from that quarter). The smaller group of six officers who had decided to go ahead with their plans without their colleagues decided in the last few days preceding their coup to select the most senior of the six, Col. Jaafar Mohamed Nimeiri, to be leader of the government which they would install. On May 24, 1969 the paratroop units of Maj. Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim and Maj. Zein al Abdin M.A. Abd al Gadir rendezvoused with the armored troops of Maj. Khalid Hassan Abbas and

moved into the capital, easily taking control by the morning of May 25, 1969.

The twenty-six months between May 1969 and July 1971 were characterized by collegial rule by a small, relatively homogeneous group. Domestic policy was devoted to the consolidation of the new regime, a leftist and reformist program, and immediate attention to the southern Sudan conflict. From the first hours of the new government it was clear that its foreign policy would be radical. Although the Mahgoub government had severed relations with the United States over its support for Israel and had supported Nasser, it did not go as far as the new government did to plant itself clearly in Nasser's camp. The Arab-Israeli conflict had never been as important a key to Sudanese foreign policy as it became in the 1969-1971 period. Likewise, although the Sadeq al Mahdi government had initiated arms purchases from the Soviet bloc, no government before May 1969 had entered into as intimate a relationship with the Soviet Union and its allies as did the regime brought to power in the "May Revolution." Also, for the first time, the Sudan placed itself in the informal coalition of radical African states. The importance of the Sudan's African neighbors to the resolution of the southern problem, however, made it necessary to seek good relations with them, whether radical or conservative.

THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

On May 25, 1969 a Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) of ten men was created to "assume sovereign state affairs on behalf of the people."¹⁷ All power was vested in this council which was to appoint a cabinet to assume legislative and executive powers. The cabinet was collectively responsible to the RCC, and the appointment and dismissal of cabinet ministers was the prerogative of the RCC. In fact the ten members of the RCC functioned collectively as the highest decision-making body of the new government, granting some powers to the cabinet (or Council of Ministers as it was sometimes called), but always retaining the ultimate authority.¹⁸

With the exception of Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah, the RCC members were very similar to one another. The nine officers were all of middle or upper class families from large northern Sudanese tribes which had traditionally played a leading role

¹⁷ RCC Decree Number One, Omdurman Domestic Service, May 25, 1969, cited in FBIS, May 26, 1969, p. T8. In addition to the six officers who had engineered the May 25 coup, the RCC included Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah as an ex officio member and three members of the Free Officers executive committee who had not voted with the six to move ahead with the coup but who would have been on the RCC if the plans made by the whole organization been executed: Lt. Col. Babikir al Nur, Maj. Hashim al Atta, and Maj. Abu al Gasim Hashim.

¹⁸ Ibid. Interviews with members of the RCC.

¹⁹ Abu al Gasim Hashim, Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, Farouk Osman Hamadallah, Khalid Hassan Abbas, and Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid: Ja'ali; Hashim al Atta: Shaigi; Jaafar Mohamed Nimeiri: Dongolawi; and Babikir al Nur: Khandagawi (a tribal group related to the Dongolawi). Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah is a Dongolawi. There were also three sets of cousins on the RCC: Khalid Hassan Abbas and Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid; Abu al Gasim Hashim and Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim; and Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim and Zein al Abdin M. A. Abdel Gadir.

in Sudanese political life.¹⁹ All nine officers were products of the Sudan's military college and had graduated within a few years of one another.²⁰ Most of them had served in the southern Sudan during the civil war.

While Babikir Awadallah was from a similar family background, his age, education, and political experience set him apart from the nine officers. Trained as a lawyer, he had served as Speaker of the House in the first parliamentary government, had been the leader of the Professional Front during the October 1964 Revolution, and had been Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1964 to 1967. At the time of the May 1969 coup he was fifty-one, Nimeiri was thirty-eight, and the eight younger officers ranged in age from twenty-nine to thirty-four.²¹

With the exceptions of the two officers who were members of the Communist Party of the Sudan (CPS) (Lt. Col. Babikir al Nur and Maj. Hashim al Atta) and of the politically-sophisticated Prime Minister, the members of the RCC were without political experience or a clear program of political objectives.²² One practical and three ideological goals were shared by the the seven non-communist officers of the RCC.

²⁰ Nimeiri was from the fourth batch out of the college, Babikir al Nur from the seventh, Abu al Gasim Hashim from the ninth, Khalid Hassan Abbas and Farouk Osman Hamadallah from the tenth, Hashim al Atta from the eleventh, and Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, Zein al Abdin M.A. Abdel Gadir and Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid from the thirteenth.

²¹ A table with information on the RCC members is presented in Appendix B.

²² The information on the attitudes of the RCC in this and subsequent paragraphs is based on interviews with surviving officers of the RCC and former Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah.

First, most had served in the southern Sudan and they were acutely aware of the massive destruction of human life and property, the drain on the Sudan's meager financial resources, and the strain on the ill-equipped Sudanese army that had resulted from the conflict. They came to power with a strong determination to find a solution to the civil strife which had plagued the Sudan since 1955.

A second factor -- related to the first -- was the strong nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiment which was common to the seven non-communist RCC officers. They felt that the West had played a cynical role in supporting the southern Sudanese and were bitter about the entire history of foreign intervention in the Sudan. Their notions of anti-imperialism led them to find common cause with the developing nations of Africa and the Middle East and they identified the West -- particularly the United States -- as the enemy of the third world. The intimacy with the Soviet bloc which was to be a major factor in the foreign policy between May 1969 and July 1971 was based not only on the presence of two communist officers on the RCC and the strong influence of communist advisors close to the RCC, but most importantly on the view of all the members of the RCC that the Soviet Union was the friend of third world liberation movements and the Arab nations, particularly the Palestinians, while the United States, the supporter of Israel and South Africa, was the main imperialist power.

The fervent nationalism of the seven non-communist officers on the RCC gave them an acute sensitivity to foreign interference in the Sudan, even by their friends. Despite the close relations with Egypt

and the Soviet Union during this period, the officers remembered Egypt's history of involvement in Sudanese domestic politics and the Soviet Union's aid to the CPS during the Abboud regime. They did not hide their sensitivity even from Nasser, whom they revered.²³ Although there was a major Egyptian and Soviet-bloc presence in the Sudan during the 1969-1971 period, this was at the invitation of the RCC and therefore was not viewed as "foreign interference" as long as the Egyptians and Soviets did not encroach beyond the areas of government in which they were invited to assist.

There was a third element in the shared political views of the seven officers of the RCC who were not CPS members. All seven were, to varying degrees, Arab nationalists and admirers of Nasser. Indeed,

indifference to Egypt was quite impossible. It was the only country we were sure would stand behind us. Nasser's backing was critical.²⁴

In addition to their shared attitudes concerning the southern conflict, nationalism/anti-imperialism, and the Arab cause, the seven officers were also, in the words of one of them, "vaguely socialist." Their socialism was not programmatic, however, and therefore they were subject to the influence of their more ideologically sophisticated leftist and communist colleagues and advisors.

²³ During one of the first visits by RCC officers to Cairo after the coup, two of them took a very tough line with the Egyptian President and told him that they did not want Egypt supporting groups like the Khatmiyyah in the Sudan anymore. Nasser agreed. Interview with a member of the RCC.

²⁴ Interview with a member of the RCC.

Lt. Col. Babikir al Nur and Maj. Hashim al Atta were members of the hard-line factions of the CPS.²⁵ Their attitudes cannot be known at this point with any certainty, but it is likely that their primary concern was for improved relations with the Soviet bloc and that they shared their colleagues' interest in resolving the southern conflict, as these were general policies of the CPS. Their attitude toward Arab nationalism is difficult to assess, but it appears that, while they were willing to see improved Sudanese relations with Egypt and the Arab world, they were not in favor of the intimate relationship which was proposed in the December 1969 Tripoli Charter uniting the Sudan, Egypt and Libya.²⁶

Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah had a somewhat different -- though not incompatible -- set of attitudes than the seven non-communist officers of the RCC. Although he had never been a communist, Babikir Awadallah was a leftist and a devout Arab nationalist. He viewed the

²⁵ There were two main factions within the CPS, of which the more hard-line was that of party Secretary-General Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub. The divisions within the CPS, and the implications for the government will be discussed below in the section dealing with domestic politics.

²⁶ Statement by Maj. Farouk Osman Hamadallah (made "a few days before his dismissal from the RCC".) cited in Al Jaridah, Beirut, December 4, 1970, cited in FBIS, December 10, 1970, pp. T13-19. He was dismissed from the RCC at the same time as the two communist officers. Discussions with friends and associates of the late Maj. Farouk Osman Hamadallah indicate that he was not a CPS member at the time of the coup, but may have been at some previous time. One close associate suggested that he had left the CPS some years earlier after a quarrel with CPS Secretary-General Abdel-Khaliq Mahgoub, with whom he did not get along, and that he had said that he was "no longer a Marxist." Most people believe he was not working with the two CPS members of the RCC in planning the July 1971 coup, but joined with them when he heard of the coup in London on July 19, 1971, for reasons of his own. Some associates think he had some connection with the Iraqi Ba'athist party, or at least was close to the Iraqi regime.

Arab-Israeli conflict as the central foreign policy question confronting all Arab states and intended it to be the prism through which the Sudan would focus its relations with the nations of the world.²⁷

The general political attitudes of the seven non-communist officers of the RCC were to a large extent internally consistent. Their nationalist/anti-imperialist concerns, their aspirations toward Arab nationalism, and their "vague" socialism were all consistent with a "radical" pro-Soviet, pro-Egyptian foreign policy. Only their urgent need to resolve the southern conflict, which required making good relations with neighboring countries (particularly Ethiopia and Uganda) regardless of their regime type, was a slightly dissonant note, but even that appeared to be well understood by the Sudan's new radical friends in Africa and the Arab world during the 1969-1971 period.

These attitudes were also reinforced by the fact that two RCC members were members of the CPS, and therefore could be expected to approve of stronger ties with the Soviet bloc and, to some extent, with Egypt, which was at this time a Soviet client itself. The views of Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah, who played a major role in foreign policy-making, were entirely compatible with those of the seven non-communist officers of the RCC. Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict as the paramount issue of Sudanese foreign policy, he also perceived the United States negatively because of its support for Israel, and the Soviet Union positively because of its

²⁷ Interview with Babikir Awadallah.

support of the Arab states. He was relatively unconcerned with Sudanese policy toward the African states and toward the southern conflict, and so did not disagree with the policy in these areas set by the officers of the RCC.

The pro-Soviet, anti-Western attitudes of the RCC were also reinforced by the strong influence of two powerful insiders, one of whom joined the decision-making group as Foreign Minister in August 1970. Farouk Abu Isa, a lawyer who was a member of the soft-line faction of the CPS, was Minister of State for Foreign Affairs before becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs in August 1970. Ahmad Suleiman, a prominent CPS member of the same soft-line faction, was appointed Ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1969 and Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade in 1970.

Between May 1969 and July 1971 foreign policy was formulated at the highest level, by the RCC and the two consecutive Foreign Ministers of the period.²⁸ Decisions were made informally within the RCC, and each member of the group had equal weight: RCC Chairman Nimeiri was no more than first among equals. Decisions were not usually reached by voting, but only after discussion had made the different positions clear and some kind of consensus had been reached. On most issues consensus was attained, though a few issues did generate divisions primarily between the two communist members of the RCC (sometimes supported by others on the council) and the non-communists. There was a conscious feeling on the part of the RCC that voting within the RCC

²⁸ The following discussion of the decision-making process is based on interviews during the course of this research with members of the RCC, including the one non-military member, Babikir Awadallah.

(or within the Council of Ministers) would lead to the creation of permanent "pro" and "con" groups, out of which would grow an institutionalized opposition. "This was something we didn't need."²⁹

While all decision-making authority rested with the RCC, many individual issues, most detailed policy and policy implementation were in the hands of the two men who were Foreign Minister during this period. Babikir Awadallah was actually a member of the RCC, both were highly regarded by the officers of the RCC, and the two men were also friends. While the Council of Ministers technically reviewed matters of foreign policy, there was little scope for their role between the strong initiating and implementing roles of the two Foreign Ministers and the decisive nature of RCC powers.

For the first year of the new government the officers of the RCC were almost constantly on the move, either outside the Sudan or -- more often -- on trips to the rural areas of the country, explaining the program of the new government in an attempt to maintain the initial popularity of the regime and cut off the rural roots of support for the Ansar, the Khatmiyyah and their affiliated political parties. Added to this was their inexperience in government and their deference to those whom they had selected as advisors. These factors added to the major role in foreign policy played by the Foreign Ministers of the period. Implementation of foreign policy was largely in the hands of the Foreign Minister and the Ministry staff, but the officers of the RCC were often involved directly in foreign negotiations and made important policy statements as members of the

²⁹ Interview with a member of the RCC.

collective executive of the Sudan.

DOMESTIC POLITICS, MAY 1969-JULY 1971

The domestic priorities of the RCC were the resolution of the southern problem, the implementation of a revolutionary program of social and political reform, and the consolidation of the power of the RCC. The first sign of a southern policy on the part of the new regime was the declaration in June 1969 that the government recognized the right of the southern Sudanese to regional autonomy. In the period leading up to the Addis Ababa accord of March 1972, the government initiated a series of steps designed to make the situation ripe for a negotiated agreement, including: contacts with southern Sudanese in the Sudan and in exile, an increase in the number of southerners appointed to ministerial posts and other positions in government (in both northern and southern Sudan), contacts with outside organizations and governments to enlist their aid in resolving the problem, and the selective application of military pressure in the south.³⁰

The reform program of the "May Revolution" included public corruption trials of former ministers and severe new penalties for political corruption, reduced salaries and perquisites for cabinet ministers, and an expansion of the public sector, including especially government control of the distribution of basic commodities. Although the new regime had stated in its early days that it was not going to

³⁰ While the southern Sudan conflict will be touched upon in various parts of subsequent sections of this research, it is too complex a topic to treat here in any detail. In any case, it is the subject of a number of books, articles and dissertations.

engage in widespread nationalization, the plans for the scheme were quietly being drawn up by Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Ahmad Suleiman and discussed in the RCC for several months prior to the announcement.³¹

The third domestic priority of the new government - consolidation of its power base - was implemented in three ways: (1) measures to build up the morale, size, effectiveness and security of the armed forces; (2) measures which concentrated power and authority in the RCC itself; and (3) steps to eliminate all alternative centers of political power, whether individuals or groups. Attention to the army, the means by which the RCC had come to power, came in several forms. Salaries and benefits were increased; new and better equipment was obtained from the Sudan's new friends in Eastern Europe; and the size of the officers' corps was dramatically increased by increasing the size of the classes admitted to the military college (from around

³¹ One former RCC member commented that Nasser stated, when told of the plans, that they should "start with the Bank al Masri" {the Egyptian bank}. So the plan for nationalisation was not only discussed fully in the RCC but also with Nasser before being announced beginning in May 1970. In May 1970 the RCC granted Nimeiri the authority to "take certain economic measures" to be announced on May 25, 1970, including the nationalization of banks. The plans were not discussed in the Council of Ministers, for most of whose members the May 1970 announcement was a complete surprise. Interestingly the nationalizations were opposed by the hard-line faction of the CPS as a "vulgarization" (or because the CPS wanted the "honor of nationalization" to go to some future communist regime). Despite this, however, the two communist members of the RCC did not openly oppose the nationalizations or the confiscation of the property of a Sudanese businessman allegedly engaged in corrupt practices. The only three who were against the confiscation were Babikir Awadallah, Abu al Gasim Hashim and Farouk Osman Hamadallah. Interview with members of the RC (including Babikir Awadallah), former Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Ahmad Suleiman, and former Minister of Rural Cooperatives Osman Abu al Gasim Hashim.

eighty per year to about four hundred).³² Another method the RCC used to promote continued army support was the continuation of the Free Officers' organization, which continued throughout the 1969-1971 period.³³ Finally the National Security Law of August 1970 provided, among other things, for the establishment of a military department for national security independent of other military organizations and reporting directly to the RCC.³⁴

The second avenue of power consolidation was the legalization of the RCC's role as the sole legitimate power in the state, accomplished straightforwardly in RCC decrees, beginning with Republican Decrees One and Two of May 25, 1969 and continuing with Decree Four in April 1970. Other measures served the same end. In January 1970, amid reports of subversive elements at the University of Khartoum (the traditional vanguard of protest and the breeding ground of Sudanese politics of all stripes), the RCC issued a decree amending the University law, making the head of state guardian of the University with the power to appoint its administration, reducing the size of the teachers' council and putting students on this council for the first

³² Revolutionary Council proclamation to free officers and soldiers, Omdurman Domestic Service, May 28, 1969 {sic}, cited in FBIS Daily Report, May 27, 1969, p. T 1. Also, interviews with members of the RCC.

³³ The executive committee of the organization usually met in the Palace and the headquarters of the organization was located at Army Headquarters in Khartoum North, all under the direction of the new head of army intelligence. Sometimes the executive committee met as often as once a week. Members of the RCC -- especially Minister of Defense Khalid Hassan Abbas -- kept in close contact with the organization and RCC members often attended its meetings. Interview with former RCC members.

³⁴ Middle East News Agency broadcast from Cairo, August 4, 1970, cited in FBIS, August 7, 1970, p. T6.

time.³⁵

Insuring the cooperation of the army and legalizing the power of the RCC were not difficult aspects of the consolidation of power of the new regime. Neither was the elimination of individual centers of potential opposition, as the powers of the RCC included the right to dismiss anyone in the government preremptorily.³⁶ The fourth aspect of power consolidation -- elimination of opposition groups -- was a long and in the end, violent process.

Although all political parties had been banned officially on May 25, 1969, the greatest threat to the new government came from the now-illegal political parties. In fact the attitude of most of the officers of the RCC toward the parties (particularly the Umma) affected much of their planning for the coup itself, because they were far more anxious about the opposition of the individual parties than the actual government in power in May 1969. Of the traditional parties, the NUP/DUP was viewed in a different light than the Umma, which was perceived as having an Ansar constituency ready to do anything at the signal of the leader. Most of the RCC perceived the NUP as a party which had had a genuine political constituency in the Sudan. Some RCC members had been close to prominent NUP members who

³⁵ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 10, 1970, cited in FBIS, January 12, 1970, p T4.

³⁶ One RCC officer says that the RCC "purged widely on the advice of the Communist Party; sometimes we purged people without even knowing them". Interview with a member of the RCC. Babikir Awadallah on the other hand suggests that purges were more of a judicial proceeding. Some dismissals suggested by ministers were refused for lack of evidence of corruption or opposition to the "Revolution". He never knew of any list of people to be purged suggested by the CPS.

had supported the young officers in 1964 and afterwards; and most of the RCC members felt that their quarrel was with the NUP leadership rather than the membership.³⁷

Technically the Communist Party of the Sudan had been banned at the same time as the other parties, but in practice its meetings and activities were ignored for months, as long as they remained supportive of the regime.³⁸ In any case the CPS was by no means monolithic, and members from both factions were participating at the highest levels of the government.³⁹

It was not a fortuitous accident that the regime was able to deal first with the opposition of the traditional elements before tackling the more insidious problem of the threat posed by its sometime ally, the CPS. Even before the coup at least two of RCC members -- Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah and Minister of Interior Maj. Farouk Osman Hamadallah -- had discussed the strategy of

using the Communist Party to hit the traditional parties and individuals and then hitting the communist party itself.⁴⁰

³⁷ The late Musa Mubarak had been particularly helpful to the FO organization. Interview with a former member of the RCC.

³⁸ As former CPS member and cabinet minister Moawiya Ibrahim asked rhetorically during an interview, "Why should the government stop our activities if all I'm doing is printing and circulating leaflets supporting the government?" Interview with Moawiya Ibrahim.

³⁹ The best known minister from the Abdel-Khaliq Mahgoub faction was Minister of Supply (later of Southern Affairs) Joseph Garang; the most prominent members of the other wing in the Council of Ministers were Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Ahmad Suleiman, Minister of State Farouk Abu Isa, and Minister of State Moawiya Ibrahim. But there were others as well in the Council of Ministers, some of whom were known by the RCC to be CPS members, others considered by the RCC to be socialists, but not necessarily CPS members. Interview with former RCC members.

Furthermore, in the early days of the new government, the CPS was regarded by the RCC as a supportive element: they felt the CPS was publically perceived as the only organized, progressive group and by virtue of its natural organizational tendencies, it was experienced in mobilizing mass demonstrations of public support.⁴¹

The Khatmiyya and its political affiliate, the DUP, were dealt with first. Mohamed Osman al Mirghani, leader of the Khatmiyyah, was called into the office of a member of the RCC in late 1969, given a list of the arms which the RCC knew to be in the sect's possession, and given twenty-four hours to turn the weapons in to the authorities. Although the sect's leadership tried to avoid this by going to the families of RCC members with Khatmiyyah connections, the sect ultimately complied.⁴²

The first violent strike at the opposition was aimed at what the RCC viewed as the greatest immediate threat, the Ansar.⁴³ The members of the RCC did not have in mind the kind of violent confrontation which developed at Aba Island in March 1970; in fact, some kind of accomodation was attempted with Umma leader Sadeq al Mahdi and efforts were made to avoid violence.⁴⁴ Finally however the RCC began to feel that the Ansar were interpreting any gesture of conciliation on the

⁴⁰ Interview with Babikir Awadallah.

⁴¹ Interview with a member of the RCC.

⁴² Interview with a member of the RCC.

⁴³ Interview with members of the RCC.

⁴⁴ Interview with a member of the RCC. A Middle East News Agency broadcast from Cairo suggested that Sadeq al Mahdi met with the new RCC immediately after the May 1969 coup. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 3, 1969, cited in FBIS, June 5, 1969. p. 16.

part of the government as a sign of weakness and were deliberately forcing a showdown.⁴⁵ At the end of March 1970, RCC Chairman Nimeiri's tour of the Aba Island area was interrupted by hostile demonstrations and clashes broke out in the Wad Nubawi section of Omdurman between armed Ansar and security forces. By March 31 the RCC had decided to move against the Ansar and on that date troops under the command of RCC member Maj. Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim took control of Aba Island in a bloody confrontation.⁴⁶ A few days later the Imam al Hadi was killed attempting to cross into Ethiopia.

The success of the confrontation with the Ansar, and the fact that this was accomplished without public backlash, encouraged RCC members to believe that they could take on any domestic group, even the communists.⁴⁷ But the conflict with the Communist Party of the Sudan was more complex, slower to develop, and ultimately more dangerous to the regime than the elimination of the threats posed by the traditional parties.

The RCC allowed the CPS to function semi-openly for some months after the coup, and it was not until October 1969 that clear signs of

⁴⁵ Interview with a member of the RCC.

⁴⁶ The interesting question of Egyptian participation in the operation at Aba Island cannot be definitively answered. Interviews with cabinet members and RCC members yield different scenarios: that no airplanes were involved in the confrontation, that a Sudanese plane with a Sudanese pilot participated, that a Sudanese plane dropped Egyptian bombs, or that an Egyptian plane with an Egyptian pilot was involved. There is agreement that Egyptian officers -- including Hosni Mubarak of the Egyptian Air Force -- were in the Sudan at that time. In any case, there is universal agreement that reports of Soviet involvement were incorrect.

⁴⁷ Interview with a member of the RCC.

strain between the government and the CPS became evident.⁴⁸ An off-the-cuff response to a question at a conference in East Germany by Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah noting the role of "revolutionary elements, including the communists" in the "May Revolution," was greeted with an dramatic response by the RCC. The Chairman of the RCC reiterated the ban on parties, including the CPS, and a major cabinet reshuffle stripped the Prime Minister of his post (although he remained Foreign Minister and became Deputy RCC Chairman and Deputy Prime Minister), removed some of his supporters from the cabinet, and brought three more RCC officers into the cabinet.⁴⁹ The exaggerated reaction by the RCC was presumably due to concern on the part of some RCC members that there might be a bad reaction to the comment in the Sudan where some people were still concerned about the extent of communist influence in the government. It is also possible that this incident was simply a pretext for diminishing the status of Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah, whose prestige was no longer as necessary to the officers as it had been in the first weeks after the coup.

⁴⁸ The whole question of the split in the CPS and the nature of the relationship between CPS Secretary-General Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub's wing of the party and the government is extraordinarily complex and cannot be explored here in detail. See The Struggle in the Sudanese Communist Party, Translations on the Near East, no. 647, (Springfield, Virginia: National Technical Information Service, August 31, 1971)

⁴⁹ Brig. Khalid Hassan Abbas became Minister of Defense (and was promoted to major general); Maj. Hashim al Atta, Minister of Animal Resources; and Maj. Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, Minister of Local Government. The two communist RCC members, and RCC member Farouk Osman Hamadallah told Babikir Awadallah that they had opposed the measures taken against him at the meeting, but had been in the minority. But other reports indicate that none of the RCC members took a firm stand against the reshuffle. Interview with Babikir Awadallah.

This was the beginning of difficult times for the CPS. The two leading Sudanese newspapers launched an anti-communist campaign; there were clashes at the University of Khartoum between communists and anti-communists; and CPS Secretary-General Abdel-Khaliq Mahgoub openly criticized those who attacked his party.⁵⁰ Perhaps even more ominous for the CPS was the fact that only a few days after calling for the expulsion of the CPS members from the government, the editor of Al Ayam received a congratulatory telegram from RCC Chairman Nimeiri, an act which was construed by some as endorsement of the newspaper's line on the CPS.⁵¹

Less than a week after the seizure of Aba Island from the Ansar, CPS Secretary-General Abdel-Khaliq Mahgoub was deported.⁵² In August 1970 the CPS Secretary-General returned from exile and was arrested. By September 1970 the split between Secretary-General Abdel-Khaliq Mahgoub's wing of the CPS and the faction which supported the regime had become critical. In a clandestine meeting in September 1970 the CPS, in the absence of the pro-government faction, voted overwhelmingly not to disband.

On November 16, 1970 three members of the RCC, two of whom were communists were dismissed from all their posts: Lt. Col. Babikir al Nur, Maj. Hashim al Atta, and Maj. Farouk Osman Hamadallah. In a

⁵⁰ Middle East News Agency, Damascus, October 11, 1969, cited in FBIS, October 13, 1969, p. T10.

⁵¹ An Nahar, Beirut, no date, cited in FBIS, April 7, 1970, p. T5.

⁵² RCC member Maj. Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim declared, however, that this did not foreshadow an attack on "progressive forces." Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, April 6, 1970, cited in FBIS, April 7, 1970, p. T5.

statement issued on the same day, RCC Chairman Nimeiri accused the three of "leaking classified information to subversive elements."⁵³ Verbatim records of RCC meetings had been made known to the CPS and the other RCC members felt that they had become "sitting ducks" for the communists.⁵⁴

Within a short time the confrontation between the regime and the CPS had deteriorated into open conflict. On December 1, 1970 the CPS started denouncing the Sudanese government from Beirut, charging that it had sought union with Egypt without popular approval and that Egypt was masterminding the anti-communist repression going on in the Sudan.⁵⁵ In February 1971 RCC Chairman Nimeiri replied with a lengthy speech denouncing the CPS and vowing to "crush and destroy" it.⁵⁶ By April the split within the CPS, and between the Abdel-Khaliq Mahgoub faction and the government, had reached such proportions that the Soviet Union took the initiative of sending a high-level delegation to Khartoum to mediate.⁵⁷ Although the Soviet delegation met with both factions of the CPS and with the RCC, the mediation attempt was

⁵³ Arab Report and Record, November 16-30, 1970.

⁵⁴ Interview with a member of the RCC.

⁵⁵ Agence France Presse, Paris, December 2, 1970, cited in FBIS, December 3, 1970, p. T3.

⁵⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, February 12, 1971, cited in FBIS, February 16, 1971, pp. T1-4.

⁵⁷ The delegation was led by Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Kuznitzov, who had been the Soviets' chief negotiator with the Chinese.

⁵⁸ The pro-government faction of the CPS had the impression that their point of view was supported by the Soviets. Kuznitzov reportedly told them that the hard-line faction led by Secretary-General Abdel-Khaliq Mahgoub would "lead this revolution to hell" and that

unsuccessful.⁵⁸ By the beginning of June 1971, the CPS Secretary-General had dismissed the fourteen pro-government members of the twenty-eight person CPS Central Committee and the new, small Central Committee had decided that the government should be removed. On June 30, 1971 the CPS Secretary-General escaped from detention. At this point RCC Chairman Nimeiri and the RCC were warned by pro-government ex-members of the CPS that a coup was in the offing, but the accusations made against several key officers were not believed.⁵⁹

On July 19, 1971 the government was overthrown and replaced by a seven-man RCC; on July 22, 1971 forces loyal to the Nimeiri government regained power. It may never be known who was the mastermind of the short-lived coup, but the most prominent participants were the three ex-members of the RCC who had been dismissed in November 1970. The other two prominent leaders of the coup were the commanders of the Palace Guard and the Armored Corps, as the pro-government CPS members had warned before the coup. Few people doubted that the CPS Secretary-General was intimately involved, but the trials were carried out so hastily and in such an atmosphere of bitterness that this was never objectively proven. The sense of personal betrayal felt by Nimeiri and his RCC colleagues was heightened by the death of thirty-

the pro-government faction should try to mitigate the danger posed by the other faction. Interview with Moawiya Ibrahim.

⁵⁹ RCC Chairman Nimeiri and Minister of Defense and RCC member Khalid Hassan Abbas were warned by CPS pro-government faction leaders Ahmad Suleiman, Moawiya Ibrahim and Farouk Abu Isa on July 5th, but they did not believe accusations against Palace Guard Commander Abu Sheba and Armored Corps Commander Abdel Moneim. Deputy RCC Chairman and Minister of Justice Babikir Awadallah was told the same thing by Ahmad Suleiman and Farouk Abu Isa (who were at that time Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, respectively). Interviews with Ahmad Suleiman, Moawiya Ibrahim and Babikir Awadallah.

eight officers and NCO's who had been taken prisoner during the coup, one of whom was the younger brother of Minister of Defense and RCC member Khalid Hassan Abbas.⁶⁰

FOREIGN POLICY, MAY 1969-JULY 1971

Policy toward the USSR, the US and Europe

Sudanese policy toward the two superpowers and Europe between May 1969 and July 1971 underwent no changes from the policies adopted by the regime immediately upon its accession to power, remaining consistent throughout the period. Policy toward the Soviet Union and its allies, which were generally viewed as a group, was extremely friendly. Policy toward the Western nations, which were viewed more as individual states, ranged from the friendly policy adopted toward some European nations to the extreme hostility directed at the United States.

The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe

While the first formulation of the regime's foreign policy in Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah's statement of May 25, 1969 did not directly address the question of the new government's planned policy toward the two superpowers, the leftist and anti-imperialist orientation of the ruling group was quite clear. He noted that the new government was "considering" certain financial policies, including:

expansion and strengthening trade and economic relations with socialist and Arab States through bilateral agreements in order to break away from the imperialist market...⁶¹

⁶⁰ Interview with members of the RCC.

Relations between the Sudan and all the nations of the Soviet camp except Romania expanded immediately in all fields following the May 1969 coup d'etat.⁶² Sudanese policy was based on a conscious effort to establish "special relations" with the Soviet bloc because

we believe it is our ally in the struggle...to bring about profound changes in our society.⁶³

The dramatic turn to the Soviet bloc was evident within a few weeks of the coup d'etat. Two weeks after diplomatic relations with East Germany were established on June 3, 1969, an East German delegation had visited the Sudan. At that time an agreement was signed on wider economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation and the two governments declared that they had "identical views on major world issues."⁶⁴ Also in June a Sudanese military delegation visited the Soviet Union, and an economic delegation from the Sudan visited the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and East Germany to negotiate economic and trade agreements.⁶⁵

The new Sudanese entente with the Soviet bloc was demonstrated in the large number of agreements and the high level of official contact. During the twenty-six months between May 1969 and July 1971 multiple agreements in military, economic, and cultural cooperation were signed

⁶¹ Statement by Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah, revised English text, based on BBC Monitoring Service and Sudan News, Khartoum, cited in Arab Report and Record, May 16-31, 1969.

⁶² Romania was the only exception in the Soviet bloc and will be discussed below.

⁶³ Statement by RCC Chairman Nimeiri, Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1969.

⁶⁴ Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1969. Omdurman Domestic Service, June 7, 1969, cited in FBIS, June 9, 1969, pp. T4-5.

⁶⁵ Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1969.

with the Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Poland.⁶⁶ Numerous delegations and official visits were exchanged between the Sudan and the nations of the Soviet bloc.⁶⁷ President Nimeiri visited the Soviet Union and some of its Eastern European allies with large delegations in November 1969, July 1970, and March 1971 and reported generous aid from these nations for Sudanese development projects.⁶⁸ The Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade said that the contribution of the Soviet Union and the five Eastern European states Nimeiri had visited in July 1970 (including Yugoslavia) was equivalent to 40 percent of the total projects of the Five Year Plan.⁶⁹ Sudanese exports to the Soviet Union almost trebled between 1969 and 1970, rising from 4.7 percent of total Sudanese exports in 1969 to 15.7 percent in 1970.⁷⁰ On Nimeiri's first visit in November 1969 he was the guest of honor at the USSR's celebration of the November 1917

⁶⁶ Agreements were signed with the Soviet Union in the fields of culture in October 1969 (Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1969), technical cooperation in March 1971 (Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1971), and politics, economics and culture in March 1971 (Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1971). Agreements were signed with East Germany in the realms of economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation in June 1969 (Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1969), and health in May 1970 (Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1970). An agreement was signed with Bulgaria on technical cooperation (a Bulgarian loan for technical aid) in September 1969 (Arab Report and Record, September 16-30, 1969) and with Hungary on cultural cooperation in March 1970 (Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1970). A trade agreement was signed with Poland in June 1969 (Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1969).

⁶⁷ Even an incomplete list of visits and delegations illustrates the strength of the relationships established. An economic delegation from the Sudan visited the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland and East Germany in late June 1969 (Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1969) and a military delegation toured East Germany, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union in March 1970 (Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1970). Sudanese delegations to the Soviet Union included: a military delegation in June 1969 (Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1969), a security delegation in September 1970 (Arab Report and Record, September 16-30, 1970), and other military delegations in

Revolution, an honor rarely accorded leaders of non-communist nations.

Military equipment from the Soviet bloc nations flowed into the Sudan, although it must be noted that some of it had been ordered in 1966/67. The equipment reportedly included two squadrons of MIG-21's, T-55 tanks and 27 bombers.⁷¹ Soviet and East German advisors were invited to participate in military planning and training and were present in the police and national security networks as well.⁷²

The new government made it clear from the beginning that it would attempt to redirect its trade relations toward the Soviet bloc and the Arab states. The priority in the imports budget was to be given to nations with which the Sudan had bilateral trade agreements, primarily East European and Arab countries; imports from Western nations were to be limited to absolute necessities.⁷³ Soviet purchases of Sudanese

December 1970 and April 1971 (Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1970 and April 16-31, 1971). Soviet delegations to the Sudan included: a military delegation in July 1969 (Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1969), a planning delegation and team arriving for a six month stay in September 1969 (Arab Report and Record, September 1-15, 1969), a delegation led by the First Deputy Foreign Minister in October 1969 (Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1969), and a visit to Port Sudan by elements of the Soviet Navy in December, 1969 (Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1969). Sudanese delegations visited East Germany in April 1970 (Arab Report and Record, April 15-30, 1970), October 1970 (Arab Report and Record, October 16-31, 1970), and April 1971 (Arab Report and Record, April 16-30, 1971). East German delegations were reported to have visited the Sudan in June 1969 (Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1969), and April 1970 (Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1970). Sudanese delegations visited Czechoslovakia in May 1970 (Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1970), Bulgaria in June 1970 (Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1970) and July 1970 (Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1970). Delegations were received in the Sudan from Bulgaria in July 1970 (Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1970), and Hungary in January 1971 (Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1971).

⁷³ Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1969 and March 1-15, 1971.

cotton reportedly trebled in the first fifteen months after the coup.⁷⁴ A large Soviet economic delegation came for a six months stay in September 1969 to work with Sudanese officials on the development of long-range economic plans.⁷⁵

In the field of cultural relations, friendship societies were started with the communist countries, and many of these nations opened cultural centers in the Sudan. The Soviets and their allies offered assistance in youth training, aid to Sudanese universities, and scholarships for Sudanese students in Soviet and East European universities.

Political and diplomatic manifestations of the friendship with the Soviet bloc were numerous. The first major foreign policy act of the new government was the establishment of diplomatic relations with East Germany on May 27, 1969; this was followed on June 21 with the establishment of diplomatic relations with North Korea and recognition of the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) Provisional Revolutionary

⁶⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, July 10, 1970, cited in FBIS, July 14, 1970, p. T3.

⁷⁰ Neither Sudanese imports from the USSR, nor Sudanese trade with Eastern Europe, however, showed as great an increase as this figure. See Appendix C for detailed breakdown of Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

⁷¹ Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1969, October 16-31, 1970 and November 16-30, 1969.

⁷² Interviews with Salah Abdel Aal Mabrouk and Tariq Ameer Taha.

⁷³ Announcement by Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Abd al Karim Mirghani, August 6, 1969, cited in Arab Report and Record, August 1-16, 1969.

⁷⁴ Table of Sudanese trade with Soviet bloc, 1969-1971.

⁷⁵ Arab Report and Record, September 1-15, 1969.

Government of South Vietnam.⁷⁶ One year later the Sudan even established diplomatic relations at the embassy level with the Mongolian People's Republic.⁷⁷

The pattern of Sudanese-Soviet bloc ties during the 1969-71 period was one of consistently warm relations, with the exception of the maverick of the Warsaw Pact, Romania. The Sudan broke diplomatic relations with Romania in August 1969 because Romania had raised its diplomatic relations with Israel to the embassy level.⁷⁸ Even then a small trade relationship with Romania was retained.

One of the remarkable aspects of the Sudanese-Soviet bloc relationship was that the growing enmity between the Sudanese government and the CPS not only appeared to have no effect on Sudanese policy toward the communist nations, but also was not perceived by the RCC as a possible threat to relations with the Soviet Union.⁷⁹ It is perhaps a measure of the naivete of the officers of the RCC that it never occurred to them that their avowed destruction of the Communist Party of the Sudan, always considered one of the (if not the) strongest in the Arab world, could have any effect on relations with the Soviet bloc. The RCC was certainly aware of the relationship that had existed between the CPS leadership and the Soviet government, but was unable to imagine that this could lead to any problems between the two governments. Soviet concern over the problems within the CPS and

⁷⁶ Arab Report and Record, May 16-31, 1969 and June 16-30, 1969.

⁷⁷ Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1970.

⁷⁸ Arab Report and Record, August 16-31, 1969.

⁷⁹ Interview with members of the RCC.

between the hard-line element of the CPS and the regime was surely evident in their taking the initiative of sending a high-level mediation team to the Sudan in spring 1971. The separation in the minds of the RCC officers between domestic and foreign communism is evident in the fact that long after the struggle with the CPS had begun, they retained good relations not only with the communist states on a government-to-government basis but also with the communist parties of the Soviet bloc nations.⁸⁰

The United States and Western Europe

Policy toward the Western European allies and the United States was not as homogeneous as policy toward the Soviet bloc allies because the RCC did not view the NATO members as a cohesive bloc.⁸¹ The RCC was cautious in its policy even toward those Western nations which it regarded as friendly and its policy toward the United States approached the level of hostility reserved for Israel. Although some Western European nations (particularly West Germany) shared the blame placed on the United States for support of Israel, South Africa and the southern Sudanese rebels, none was viewed as so implacable an enemy as the United States.

The United States

The extremely negative policy toward the United States -- almost the precise opposite of policy toward the Soviet Union -- was based on the strong belief among the members of the RCC that the United States

⁸⁰ As late as June 1971, for example, RC member Zein al Abdin M. A. Abd al Gadir officially attended a conference of the Communist Party of East Germany. Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1969.

⁸¹ Interview with members of the RCC.

was the bastion of contemporary imperialism and was aggressively attempting to subvert progressive regimes in the third world, particularly the Arab states.⁸² The centrality of the Arab/Israeli conflict in the Foreign Minister's conception of foreign policy -- and to a considerable degree in the views of the seven non-communist officers of the RCC -- played a major role in their perception of American hostility toward the Arab states in general and the new, "revolutionary" Sudanese regime in particular.

Only three days after the May 25 coup d'etat Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah stated that he would not re-establish diplomatic relations with the United States or West Germany as long as they maintained "their support to and partiality for Israel."⁸³ Trade relations with the United States, never very significant, did not improve and had little room to diminish.⁸⁴ In February 1970 Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Farouk Abu Isa remarked that the Sudan was trying to "liquidate" all US interests in the Sudan, but by this time there was little to liquidate.⁸⁵

⁸² Interview with members of the RCC, including Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah.

⁸³ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, May 28, 1969, cited in FBIS, May 29, 1969, p. T1.

⁸⁴ From its 1965-68 high point of 6.5 percent of Sudanese exports and 8.7 percent of imports, the American share of Sudanese exports and imports had dropped to 3.4 and 2.2 percent respectively by 1968 and stayed at approximately the same level for the 1969-1971 period. See Appendix C for a detailed breakdown of Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

⁸⁵ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, February 24, 1970, cited in FBIS, February 26, 1970. p. T5.

In July 1969 six American diplomats were expelled from the Sudan following several small bomb explosions in Khartoum. The Prime Minister stated that the United States was behind the incidents, adding that "imperialism and its lackeys work against our revolution..." and that the United States and other imperialist powers were contributing a great deal to the Sudan's border problems with its neighbors.⁸⁶ He indicated that the diplomats had been involved in a "counter-revolutionary plot to over-throw the regime."⁸⁷

The RCC members perceived American hostility not only toward the Sudanese government, but also its counterparts in Egypt, Libya and Somalia. In December 1969 RCC member and Minister of Interior Farouk Osman Hamadallah accused the United States of having allotted fifty million pounds sterling to destroy the Sudanese, Libyan and Somali revolutions.⁸⁸ Only a few days later RCC Chairman Nimeiri declared that

imperialism, represented by the US intelligence services, supports and consolidates reaction in resisting popular revolutions

⁸⁶ Press Conference, Middle East News Agency, Cairo, cited in FBIS, July 29, 1969, pp. T3-4.

⁸⁷ Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1969. In a November 1981 interview for this research he indicated that he now believed that these incidents were likely to have been Soviet operations made to look as if they were done by the US, in order to further inflame anti-American views in the Sudan.

⁸⁸ Speech on Radio Cairo, no date, cited in Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1969.

⁸⁹ Cairo Domestic Service, December 27, 1969, cited in FBIS, December 29, 1969, p. T14.

and referred in particular to the Sudan, Egypt and Libya.⁹⁰ The RCC saw an American role in every domestic conflict except that with the CPS. In the month following the regime's confrontation with the Ansar at Aba Island, another American diplomat was expelled for engaging in "activities harmful to the security of the revolution and in violation of diplomatic practices."⁹¹ In the same statement RCC Chairman Nimeiri accused the United States of working with the defunct Umma party and the Muslim Brotherhood to subvert his government; RCC member and Minister of Local Government Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim declared that the entire plot had been organized "under the guidance of US central intelligence (sic)."⁹² There were numerous references to the concept of American support of southern rebels, such as a statement by RCC Chairman Nimeiri that the United States, West Germany and Israel were plotting "to create a new Biafra" in the southern Sudan.⁹³

The axiom of American hostility to the Sudan is best illustrated by the reponse of RCC member and Interior Minister Farouk Osman Hamadallah to a question about who were the major forces plotting against the Sudanese government. Asked who was behind various plots against the Sudan, he replied, "Of course, the United States."⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, April 8, 1970, cited in FBIS, April 9, 1970, p. T6.

⁹¹ ibid, and Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, April 6, 1970, cited in FBIS, April 7, 1970, p. T5.

⁹² Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1970.

⁹³ Al Joumhouriyah, Cairo, December 28, 1970, cited in FBIS, January 6, 1970. p. T2.

Not only did the RCC suspect the United States of plotting against it, its neighbors and its friends, but it also lost no opportunity to denounce any aspect of American policy in the third world. In a March 1970 editorial on Radio Omdurman, the United States was given equal billing with the United Kingdom on the crisis in Rhodesia:

The Rhodesian racists were ...sure that the UN would not act against them as long as the master-racist government of the USA wields massive power obtained from the sweat and blood of the African slaves...Rhodesia, like the USA, is founded on slavery and oppression of the indigenous population by British immigrants.⁹⁴

Certainly the Sudan was not alone in condemning American bombing in Cambodia, but the statement from the Foreign Ministry clearly showed that the Sudanese viewed the immediate situation as nothing more than a reflection of the fundamentally imperialist and exploitive nature of American foreign policy.

American imperialism has found a natural abode for its conspiracies in circumstances of economic and social backwardness...American imperialism has resorted to hatching plots against all movements which call for liberation from domination, backwardness, subjugation, and exploitation, cooperating in that with racism and Zionism...⁹⁵

The new government did not adopt a single policy toward the nations of Western Europe as it did with all the Soviet allies of Eastern Europe except Romania. Different patterns prevailed with Britain, West Germany, France, Italy and with the other Western European nations, with which the Sudan had insubstantial relationships.

⁹⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, March 4, 1970, cited in FBIS, March 5, 1970, p. T6.

⁹⁵ Foreign Ministry Statement, Omdurman Domestic Service, March 6, 1971, cited in FBIS, March 8, 1971, p. T4.

The United Kingdom

Sudanese policy toward the UK was unlike its policy toward any other country because of the long, complex relationship between the two. Torn between the conflicting demands of an ideological foreign policy which mandated a sharply negative policy toward Western imperialism on the one hand and a long, close relationship of aid, trade, and personal friendship which had always prevailed with Britain on the other hand, the Sudan adopted a two-tiered policy toward the United Kingdom during the 1969-1971 period. Political/diplomatic relations appeared to exist almost independently of aid and trade relations.

On the political/diplomatic level, Sudanese policy toward Britain was hostile between 1969 and 1971, though slightly less so than toward the United States. On several occasions the Sudanese threatened to break diplomatic relations, and British were often lumped with the Americans as the imperialist enemies of third world nations. In September 1969 RCC spokesman Abu al Gasim Hashim warned that the Sudan considered the UK's reported intention to sell tanks to Israel a hostile act toward the Arabs and a few days later the Minister of Information warned that such an act would have a bad effect on relations between the two countries.⁹⁶ The British government was severely criticized by the Sudan for "leading a campaign against France for agreeing to sell arms to Libya", for the the 1970 Rhodesian crisis "which occurred as a result of {Britain}...shirking its moral and constitutional obligation", and for British acceptance of the

⁹⁶ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, September 23, 1969, cited in FBIS, September 23, 1969., pp. T9-10.

possibility of minor adjustments to the borders of Israel and its Arab neighbors.” Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah expressed concern in April 1970 over activities hostile to the Sudan in certain West European countries, singling out the United Kingdom and West Germany for their support of the southern Sudanese rebels. He declared that the Sudan might reconsider its relations with the British if this continued and that the Foreign Ministry was preparing studies on the reconsideration of relations with Britain to be submitted to the May 1970 conference of the Tripoli Charter states.”⁸

The unusual characteristic of Sudanese-British relations during this period is that despite the more or less hostile relations on the political/diplomatic level, trade and aid relations continued almost as before. While the British share of Sudanese exports and imports fell slightly from its highest level in the 1965-1969 period, British-Sudanese trade remained significant.” British aid to the Sudan continued as well. In February 1970 the British provided an interest-free loan of about a million pounds to finance irrigation projects and in April 1970 a technical assistance agreement was signed under which

⁷ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, January 13, 1970, cited in FBIS, January 14, 1970, p. T4. Omdurman Domestic Service, March 2, 1970, cited in FBIS, March 3, 1970, pp. T1-2. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, April 15, 1970, cited in FBIS, April 16, 1970, pp. T2-3.

⁸ Cairo Domestic Service, April 30, 1970, cited in FBIS, May 1, 1970, pp. T2-3. Middle East News Agency, May 18, 1970, cited in FBIS, May 20, 1970, pp. T4-5.

⁹ British share of Sudanese exports, which had ranged between 6 and 9 percent in 1965-1968, fell to about 6 percent in 1970 and to about 4.3 percent in 1971. Britain's share of Sudanese imports also fell -- from a high of about 23 percent during the 1965-69 period to a new low of 13.7 percent in 1971. But Britain remained one of the Sudan's major trading partners. See Appendix C for complete breakdown of trade data, 1969-1971.

British experts would assist in Sudanese development projects.¹⁰⁰

British firms suffered more than those of any other country in the nationalizations of May and June 1970. This, however, was not a matter of hostile policy directed toward the British, but was viewed by the Sudanese government as a matter of internal policy and economic necessity.¹⁰¹ The high proportion of British firms among those foreign enterprises which were nationalized was due to the fact that so many of the foreign firms operating in the Sudan were British because of the lengthy British association with the Sudan.

The reason for the strong bond between Britain and the Sudan which survived poor relations on a political/diplomatic level lies unquestionably in the long relationship forged on a personal level between the Sudanese political elite and the British. Regardless of political persuasion, Sudanese political figures, including the officers of the RCC, appear to have a personal warmth toward the British. Many Sudanese officers received advanced training in the UK and many Sudanese intellectuals have spent time studying or teaching in British schools and universities.

West Germany

The policy of the new government toward West Germany was almost as hostile as it was toward the United States. The Bonn government was linked with the US in allegations of interference in the Sudan, both anti-government activities in the north and aid to the southern rebels. As with the US, the Prime Minister stated three days after

¹⁰⁰ Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1970 and April 1-15, 1970.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Farouk Abu Isa and Babikir Awadallah.

the coup that the Sudan would not re-establish relations with West Germany until it stopped supporting Israel.¹⁰² RCC Chairman Nimeiri, however, was quick to distinguish between the Sudan's animosity toward the West German government and the "good and peace-loving" German people who, he hoped, would persuade the Bonn government to change its attitude toward the Arabs so that the Sudan could restore diplomatic relations.¹⁰³ The same slight ambivalence toward West Germany could be detected in an August 1969 statement by the Minister of National Guidance who said that West Germany's Free Berlin radio had ended its assistance to the Sudan, but that the West German government had not abrogated any of the actual agreements it had concluded with the Sudan.¹⁰⁴

This ambivalence about consigning West Germany to the class of least favored nation along with the United States may have been due to the long tradition of aid and friendship which West Germany had offered the Sudan. Even though the RCC's belief in West German involvement in the southern Sudan conflict was based on more direct evidence than in the case of the US (because of the activities of the German mercenary, Rolf Steiner), the Sudanese government was loath to condemn West Germany as directly as the United States, saying that the Germans were not intervening directly in the conflict, but "through

¹⁰² Middle East News Agency, Cairo, May 28, 1969, cited in FBIS, May 29, 1969, p. T1.

¹⁰³ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 19, 1969, cited in FIBS, June 20, 1969, p. T5.

¹⁰⁴ Khartoum Television, August 6, 1969, cited by Agence France Presse, August 6, 1969, cited in FBIS, August 8, 1969, p. T2.

¹⁰⁵ Arab Report and Record, January 1-16, 1970 and Middle East News

various quarters."¹⁰⁵

Trade relations between the Sudan and Germany started to decline in 1969. By 1971 the West German share of Sudanese exports had been cut by half, although Germany's share of Sudanese imports remained about the same.¹⁰⁶

France

Sudanese policy toward France followed yet another pattern. Although there was little activity to the relationship in the form of agreements, aid, trade or visits, France was exempt from the criticism generally directed toward the West and was praised for its Middle East policy, particularly its arms embargo vis a vis Israel and its decision to sell aircraft to Libya. Other manifestations of Sudanese policy toward France were a 1969 announcement that French would be taught in Sudanese schools, and an agreement in technical and cultural cooperation, proposed in July 1969 and signed in December 1969, under which France provided scholarships for Sudanese students, extended its cultural and scientific services in the Sudan and cooperated in archeological research.¹⁰⁷

In political terms, France was viewed in a different way than the other nations of Western Europe. In January 1970 the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs denounced a campaign he said was led by the

Agency, Cairo, June 21, 1970, cited in FBIS, January 22, 1970, p. T1.

¹⁰⁶ See Appendix C for detailed information on Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

¹⁰⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 26, 1969, cited in FBIS, July 1, 1969, p. T6.

United States and Britain against France following the French decision to sell arms to Libya and he praised French policy on Middle East issues.¹⁰⁸ RCC Chairman Nimeiri was more emphatic in his praise of France:

France always sides with justice. I do not find it strange that France would adopt this stand... France has proven by its stand that it is a just state and wants the world to enjoy peace and security.¹⁰⁹

The Minister of Economy and Trade announced that the Sudan, Egypt and Libya were sending economic missions to Cairo to discuss with one another strengthening ties with France in response to its stand on the Arab cause. He said that the Sudan would give priority to French imports and would increase exports to France as well.¹¹⁰ In a July 1970 statement suggesting that the Sudan was committed to establishing "strategic" economic relations with countries which supported it politically, the Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade specifically mentioned "the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, third world and friendly Western countries like France".¹¹¹ Although these statements reflected the distinction between France and other Western countries in the eyes of the Sudanese government, no major changes occurred in the Sudan's trade with France, which was relatively insubstantial.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, January 13, 1970, cited in FBIS, January 14, 1970, pp. T3-4.

¹⁰⁹ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, February 13, 1970, cited in FBIS, February 16, 1970, pp. T3-4.

¹¹⁰ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, January 22, 1970, cited in FBIS, January 27, 1970, p. T6.

¹¹¹ Middle East News Agency, Cairo July 2, 1970, cited in FBIS, July 2, 1970, p. T3.

¹¹² See Appendix C for detailed breakdown of Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

The friendly policy toward France was also reflected in the declaration of seven days national mourning in the Sudan for the death of French President De Gaulle in November 1970. Only once did the Sudan publicly take France to task. In response to reports that France was considering selling arms to South Africa, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs informed the French government that the Sudan "would take firm steps against any government that decided to sell arms to South Africa."¹¹³

The friendly attitude toward France was founded for the most part on approval of French policy in the Middle East, but a secondary consideration was the residue of goodwill toward De Gaulle (inherited by Pompidou) for the resolution of the Algerian conflict, a matter which most Arab diplomats had considered as intractable as the Palestinian situation.¹¹⁴ Although the French government was dismayed at the communist influence in and on the Sudanese government between 1969 and 1971, it did not make this known until after the Sudan had become more pro-Western, after the failure of the 1971 coup.¹¹⁵

Other Western Nations

Policy toward the other Western nations was not notable. Relations with Italy, the Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, Canada, Austria, Spain and Japan were good but not highlighted by official visits, agreements, praise of their position in international affairs,

¹¹³ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 19, 1970, cited in FBIS, October 20, 1970, p. T4.

¹¹⁴ Interview with former Sudanese Ambassador to France (1970-1975) Salah Osman Hashim.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

or any other public manifestation of strong ties.

The Sudan had a substantial volume of trade with Italy, and to a lesser extent with the Netherlands and Japan; trade between these three countries and the Sudan declined slightly during the 1969-1971 period, but remained significant.¹¹⁶ Relations between the Sudan and Italy were friendly. As early as June 1969 there were discussions of Italian assistance in police training and equipment, although they did not result in agreement.¹¹⁷ Italy provided the Sudan with assistance in building portions of the Khartoum-Port Sudan road and with bridge construction as well. Although the Sudan expressed concern over Italian aid to southern Sudanese rebels, it was made clear that the RCC perceived this aid as coming from private organizations and individuals rather than the Italian government.¹¹⁸

Good relations with Denmark and Sweden were illustrated by small development loans by each country during the 1969-1971 period, although the Sudanese government was concerned about the involvement in the southern Sudan of Scandinavian groups. In April 1971 the Sudan announced that it would send a delegation to Scandinavia to 'counter the propaganda that separatists are disseminating there, misleading the Scandinavian benevolent groups.'¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ See Appendix C for detailed breakdown of Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

¹¹⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 12, 1969, cited in FBIS, June 17, 1969, p. T4.

¹¹⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, November 11, 1970, cited in FBIS, November 13, 1970, p. T4.

¹¹⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, April 7, 1971, cited in FBIS, April 9, 1971, p. T8.

There were good relations with other Western nations which were manifested in such activities as Canada's easy-credit wheat sales, Austria's interest in participation in future Sudanese development programs and Spain's credit for the purchase of scientific equipment. However, these were the only items that were made known about Sudanese relations with these countries and there is no evidence to suggest that strong bonds existed with any of them during this period.

Policy toward the Arab World

It was clear from the first day of the new government that a major part of its foreign policy would be to strengthen ties with the Arab states. What was not clear was the extent to which policy would be directed toward good relations with all the Arab nations, or particularly with the Arab "progressives."

In Arab affairs, the Revolution Government will act with full awareness of the connection of our people's destiny with that of the Arab revolutionary forces... Therefore, the Revolution Government will act to create economic, military, and cultural ties and relations with the fraternal Arab states which will strengthen the Arab nation in its bitter struggle against neo-imperialism and Zionism...¹²⁰

Despite the hint that the emphasis would be on "Arab revolutionary forces" the first Arab world tour of RCC members did not neglect any Arab capital. It soon became evident, however, that although the RCC was not -- of its own initiative -- hostile to any Arab state, it was keen to establish particularly close relations with the Arab states with which it felt the greatest ideological affinity: Egypt, Libya (after the September 1969 coup toppled King Idris), Syria, Iraq,

¹²⁰ Speech by Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah, Omdurman Domestic Service, May 25, 1969, pp. T5-6.

Algeria, North Yemen and the leadership of the PLO. It was also eager to be considered one of the "confrontation" countries, whose meetings the Sudan regularly attended between 1969 and 1971.

There were clear patterns to Sudanese policy toward the Arab world during this period. Egypt was in a class by itself in terms of the trust reposed in Nasser by the RCC, support of his policies and the strong bilateral ties developed in all fields. Into a second pattern fell Sudanese relations with the "progressive" Arab nations: Libya, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, North Yemen and the PLO. With them the Sudan enjoyed friendly relations on the level of political rhetoric, but there was very little substance to the relationships in terms of agreements, trade, or other contacts. The special case of this pattern is Libya, with which the Sudan was linked in the Tripoli Charter negotiations. But even with Libya there was very little intercourse outside of the personal relationship between the two RCCs and the framework of the Tripoli Charter negotiations.

The third pattern of relations was with all the other Arab states. Although the Sudan enjoyed good relations with these states in the interests of Arab solidarity, there appeared to be very little contact outside the framework of the Arab League, and there was no attempt by the Sudan to project the political fellowship which it felt with the Arab "progressives." The two special cases within this general pattern were Saudi Arabia and Jordan. While the Sudanese government did not initiate a hostile relationship with either one, the RCC perceived Saudi hostility aimed at the Sudan because of Saudi links with the Imam al Hadi and the Ansar leadership, and reacted strongly

in support of the Palestinians during the "Black September" Jordanian-Palestinian conflict of 1970. In neither case did the tensions go as far as breaking relations, but some harsh words were leveled at the two monarchs.

Egypt

The greatest degree of trust, the strongest personal attachment, and the most positive policy of the government instituted in May 1969 was directed to Egypt. It was the only country specifically mentioned in the first foreign policy statement of the Prime Minister/Foreign Minister on May 25, 1969, and the terms used were more than warm:

The UAR, which is part of us, has always sincerely helped in our struggle for liberation, and in the dark centuries was a beacon of education and knowledge. Unity of soil and blood, of history and language, of pains and hopes ties us to it.¹²¹

Members of the RCC felt that Egypt was the only country on which they could absolutely depend, and members of the cabinet referred to Egypt's "July 23 Revolution" as the "protective armor for the Sudan revolution."¹²²

There were five ways in which the RCC's extremely close relationship with Egypt was manifested: (1) the high level of personal contact between the RCC and Egyptian government officials; (2) the large number of bilateral agreements and undertakings entered into by the two governments; (3) the unwavering support for Nasser's policy on the Arab-Israeli conflict; (4) the Tripoli Charter, which was designed to bring together Egypt, the Sudan, Libya and later Syria; and (5) the

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Statement by Minister of Guidance Mahgoub Osman, Omdurman Domestic Service, July 21, 1969, cited in FBIS, July 22, 1969. p. T2.

degree to which the major institutions and symbols of the "May Revolution" emulated those of Egypt's "July Revolution."

There were a large number of visits to Cairo made by RCC and cabinet members during this period.¹²³ Few trips anywhere in the world by RCC members failed to start without at least a brief visit with officials of the Egyptian government, especially President Nasser. There was a constant exchange of visits by middle- and lower-level officials as well, many of whom were engaged in the follow-up arrangements of the joint ventures, joint commissions and other bilateral projects of the two countries.

An impressive number of agreements and protocols was also reached between Egypt and the Sudan during this period. As early as July 1969, after a visit to Cairo by Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah, the Sudan and Egypt reached an agreement to integrate their economies and to "develop relations in all fields" and in September 1969 a group of economic agreements to serve this end were signed in Cairo.¹²⁴ In the following months agreements were signed on cooperation in a wide variety of fields, including agriculture, trade, economics, water resources, communications, land reform, and even the re-writing of the Sudanese legal code.¹²⁵

¹²³ While Cairo is a major transportation hub for the Sudan, and thus is almost always the first and last stop on any trip around the Arab world by Sudanese political figures in any period, the number and length of the visits during this period far exceeded that of any previous period.

¹²⁴ Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1969 and Omdurman Domestic Service, September 1, 1969, cited in FBIS, September 5, 1969, p. T8.

¹²⁵ Interview with Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah.

The third, and most obvious, manifestation of policy toward Egypt was the support for Nasser's foreign policy, even when doing so meant changing policies which the RCC had already enunciated or moving away from the position adopted by the PLO, for which the RCC had declared its full support. In matters of inter-Arab politics the Sudan followed Nasser's lead.¹²⁶ More important and more pointed were the Sudan's change of course in its response to the Rogers Plan and its tensions with the PLO over this issue. The Sudan originally responded very negatively to the Rogers Plan and the ceasefire proposal of June 25, 1969. RCC member and Minister of Defense Khalid Hassan Abbas called the plan an attempt

to freeze the situation in the conflict area, change its liberatory concept, and turn it into a political conflict which can be settled through negotiations while Israel retains most of the gains obtained in June 1967... The plan amounts to a repeal of the Security Council Resolution of November 1967 and is an attempt to find partial settlements aimed at dividing and driving the Arab nation into a direct conflict with the fedayeen organizations... any settlement proposed by the United States cannot but be in Israel's favor and at the Arabs' expense.¹²⁷

On July 23, 1970 President Nasser accepted the Rogers Plan. On August 1 RCC Chairman Nimeiri announced that the Sudan fully supported Egypt in its acceptance of the plan, although he criticized American

¹²⁶ "We never did anything without telling Nasser about it first." Interview with a member of the RCC. An example is the Sudan's wary approach to the Islamic summit of September 1969 and the preparations for it, and also the approach to and evaluation of the December 1969 Arab summit. Omdurman Domestic Service, December 28, 1969, cited in FBIS, December 29, 1969, p. A5 and Middle East News Agency, July 4, 1970, cited in FBIS, July 6, 1970, pp. T6-7.

¹²⁷ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, July 4, 1970, cited in FBIS, July 6, 1970, pp. T6-7. One RCC member notes, however, that the Sudanese verdict on the Rogers Plan was reached without full knowledge of the Plan. Interview with a member of the RCC.

motives in proposing it.¹²⁸ The Sudan's acceptance of the Rogers Plan after Nasser's agreement on it was not surprising, for it was felt by the RCC that if Nasser could accept it, it behooved the other Arabs to follow his lead.¹²⁹ The surprising part of the change in the Sudanese position on the Rogers Plan was the degree to which the Sudanese approach enunciated only a few weeks before was ignored as if it had never been declared. RCC Chairman Nimeiri's ambiguous analysis of the Plan concluded that it was "compatible in form and content with the Security Council Resolution {242}..."¹³⁰

The new Sudanese policy toward the Rogers Plan was also notable for its attempt to reconcile the Sudan's continued "unlimited support" for the PLO (which had violently attacked Nasser's acceptance of the Rogers Plan) and its support of Nasser's position. The Sudan's attempt, however, to sit on the fence between Nasser and the PLO, leaning toward Nasser, was foiled by the continued PLO broadcasts from Khartoum attacking Nasser and denouncing his acceptance of the Rogers Plan. Faced with an apparently irreconcilable conflict between its attachment to the PLO and its loyalty to Nasser, on July 29, 1970, the RCC cracked down on the PLO and suspended its broadcasts from the Sudan.¹³¹ Following a full day of talks in Lebanon between the new Foreign Minister, Farouk Abu Isa, and PLO Chairman Arafat, the broadcasts were resumed a few days later, with the Sudan reserving the

¹²⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 1, 1970, cited in FBIS, August 3, 1970, pp. T8-12.

¹²⁹ Interview with deputy RCC Chairman Babikir Awadallah.

¹³⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 1, 1970, cited in FBIS, August 3, 1970, pp. T8-12.

¹³¹ Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1970.

right of censorship. But this restriction was apparently too confining for the PLO, for on August 16 it stopped broadcasts from the Sudan of its own accord.¹³²

The RCC was willing to go even farther than passively supporting Nasser's line on the Rogers Plan. Visits were made by RCC members to a number of Arab capitals in August 1970 to press for unified support of the Egyptian position.¹³³

The fourth dimension of Sudanese policy toward Egypt, the evolution of the Sudanese role in the Tripoli Charter and the Federation of Arab Republics (FAR), illustrates one of the most important aspects of Sudanese policy toward Egypt during the 1969-1971 period: the importance of the person of President Nasser as the key to the extraordinary warmth and trust between the two governments.¹³⁴ Other dimensions of Sudanese-Egyptian relations did not appear to be affected by the death of Nasser in September 1970, but the Tripoli Charter negotiations were the most sensitive dimension of the

¹³² Arab Report and Record, August 16-31, 1970. Former Foreign Minister Farouk Abu Isa said in an interview that he had personally disagreed with the decision to suspend PLO broadcasts, but he admitted that the PLO had engaged in "bad behavior, lacking in political tolerance." He felt that the PLO representative in Khartoum was taking a very aggressive position, trying to abort the agreement reached between the Sudanese government and Arafat. "I told him that we're on one front, but you have no right to make us submit to what you say... we should keep our differences inside and solve them, otherwise someone like {King} Hussein will come along, pose as the ally of Nasser, and crush you." Interview with Farouk Abu Isa.

¹³³ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 15, 1970, cited in FBIS, August 18, 1970, pp. T2-3.

¹³⁴ See also Peter K. Bechtold, "New Attempts at Arab Cooperation: The Federation of Arab Republics, 1971-?", Middle East Journal, Spring 1973, volume 27, no. 2, pp. 152-172.

relationship, touching so much on questions of national sovereignty, and were the most clearly affected. The Tripoli Charter negotiations also cast light on the important relationship of Sudanese domestic and foreign policy during this period.

The idea of some kind of unity among Egypt, Libya and the Sudan occurred to the leaders of the three states quite naturally in the wake of the Libyan coup of September 1969 which brought to power a group of military men with marked similarities to the ruling group of the Sudan and the group which had ruled Egypt following the overthrow of the monarchy in 1952.¹³⁵ Some discussion took place at the suggestion of Libya's number two man, Abd al Salem Jalloud, when he was in Khartoum in October 1969, and Jalloud passed these ideas along as he stopped off in Cairo on the way home. Nimeiri's recollection of a conversation with Nasser at that time illustrates the key role of Egypt in the unity concept as far as the Sudanese were concerned.

The proposal was that we work for the establishment of unity of Sudan, Egypt and Libya. I told him {Nasser} that a unity exists through the complementary economic agreement, the cultural agreement, and the military agreement, and that I believe this links the two countries {Egypt and the Sudan} more strongly than would a unity proclaimed by radios and the press and declared as a political unity but without a strong link at the base... I suggested to Jalloud that Libya should join these agreements so we can thereby achieve economic, cultural and military unity... we then suggested as a preliminary step that a meeting of the Egyptian, Libyan and Sudanese presidents be held in Cairo... During my conversation with President Nasser I referred to agreements which previous governments had concluded but failed to implement.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Interview with members of the RCC.

¹³⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, cited in FBIS, December 1, 1969, pp. T1-10.

Nasser, Qadafi and Nimieri met in Tripoli on the 25-27 December, 1969 and at the end of their discussions issued a joint communique which came to be known as the Tripoli Charter. It declared that the three leaders had decided to

(1) hold meetings of the three leaders every four months to follow up implementation of the unified goals of their peoples, the principles declared by their revolutions, and the aspirations and hopes of the their glorious Arab nation for freedom, socialism, and unity; (2) to form joint committees in various fields to set up the bases for the realization of cooperation and integration among the three countries in the mutual interest of their peoples.¹³⁷

It was clear from the beginning that the Sudan's idea of unity, unlike that of Libya, was a slow, organic process from the bottom up, with economic and other forms of integration leading to ultimate political union over a period of many years. Even in the first flush of enthusiasm the Sudanese side rarely referred to "union," but to cooperation.¹³⁸ The Sudan's position was summarized in an April 1970 interview with Nimeiri:

We are not in a hurry to achieve unity immediately. We have agreed to strengthen our economic, political and military relations as a first step. Unity will then be a natural outgrowth from that cooperation.¹³⁹

Although they were later accused by the Libyans of being half-hearted about the concept of unity, the Sudanese were the only of the three nations serious enough to bring lengthy, detailed working papers to

¹³⁷ Bayda Domestic Service, Tripoli, December 27, 1969, cited in FBIS, December 29, 1969, pp. A1 ff.

¹³⁸ Interview with RCC Chairman Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, December 29, 1969, cited in FBIS, December 29, 1969, p. A17. See also Press Conference of RCC Chairman Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, December 29, 1969, cited in FBIS, December 30, 1969, pp. T1-2.

¹³⁹ Arab Report and Record, April 1-16, 1970.

the first meeting of the three leaders, and their fears of "instant union" were certainly justified by events.¹⁴⁰

The meeting in Tripoli was followed by other summits: Cairo (February 1970), Khartoum (May 1970), and a fourth was planned for September 1970 in Tripoli. During these months meetings were held on a ministerial level and plans were established for cooperation in such fields as economics and communications.

A key point in the negotiations was reached in July 1970 when several Arab delegations met in Libya to celebrate the final American evacuation of Wheelus Air Force Base. President Atassi of Syria expressed his interest in joining the pact.¹⁴¹ Nasser and Qadafi were ready to fly to Damascus to declare the realization of the union, including Syria. The Sudan was represented by RCC member Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid, who expressed the view that the Sudan's situation still demanded that it delay consummation of the union. The momentum was lost when it was realized that Nasser was scheduled to go to Moscow and the plan was deferred until September.

The November 1970 summit, the first following Nasser's death in September 1970, was a major turning point for the Sudan's involvement in the Tripoli Charter. As long as Nasser was alive, he could keep the

¹⁴⁰ Interview with former Minister of Information Ahmad Abdel Halim, and former Ministry of Foreign Affairs official Abdel Mageed Haj al Amin. The latter, along with Abu Bakr Osman (who was later to become Minister for Cabinet Affairs) were the Foreign Ministry officials who drafted the working papers and handled the negotiations at the staff level.

¹⁴¹ This account of the July 1970 meeting is provided by Mohamed Haikal in an article in Al Ahram, Middle East News Agency, Cairo, May 6, 1971, cited in FBIS, May 7, 1971, pp. G5-6.

peace between cautious Sudan and impulsive Libya, but Sadat had neither the force of personality, the clout, nor apparently the inclination to do this. Conflict arose between the Sudan and Libya over the timing of the union. At the November 1970 summit Libya presented five points, including the establishment of a joint political organization and agreement on a time limit for the achievement of constitutional unity (Libya suggested three years.)¹⁴² The Sudan proposed that unity be implemented in at least two stages,

(1) economic and political liberation and the establishment of firm and stable governments affording liberty and democracy for each country individually; and (2) embarking on an evolution of united action leading to the joint objective which is to drive the three peoples toward integration and coordination.¹⁴³

Ultimately a compromise was reached and the outcome of the November 1970 summit was a five-point agreement

regarding the steps and stages for the establishment of a union of the three countries... (1) a unified tripartite command of the three presidents..{to} speed up the consolidation and the development of integration... (2) a higher planning committee; (3) a national security council; (4) a follow-up committee; and (5) a subcommittee connected with the various work sectors.¹⁴⁴

The higher planning committee met several times during the month of December 1971. By the end of December the situation had become very difficult for the Sudan. Syria had officially joined the pact at the end of November (two weeks after Assad's accession to power). In the meetings of the higher planning committee, which was empowered to set

¹⁴² Article in Libyan armed forces magazine, Al Jundi, Libyan News Agency, Tripoli, November 16, 1970, cited in FBIS, November 18, 1970, pp. T3-4.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, November 8, 1970, cited in FBIS, November 9, 1970, pp. G1 ff.

the agenda for subsequent summits, the equation had become unfavorable for the Sudan. The Libyan representative was joined by the Syrian representative on all questions, calling for speedy realization of union.¹⁴⁵ The Egyptian representative played a neutral role, leaving the Sudanese representative alone to press for a careful, stepwise plan of action. Libya insisted on submitting a new concept for immediate union, and this was inserted in the agenda for the next summit.¹⁴⁶

The January 1971 summit was relatively uneventful as it was almost entirely occupied with other problems, such as the Suez Canal ceasefire which was about to expire. But by the beginning of March the RCC had decided that it was impossible for the Sudan to join the proposed union and Deputy RCC Chairman Babikir Awadallah went to Cairo to inform Sadat.¹⁴⁷ Sadat tried to patch up the differences between Libya and the Sudan on the question of unity, but the two points of view were apparently irreconcilable. On April 15 Nimieri left the quadripartite Cairo summit for Moscow and the three other heads of state flew to Libya and proclaimed the Federation of Arab Republics on

¹⁴⁵ This account was given by the Sudanese representative at these talks, RCC member Zein al Abdin M. A. Abd al Gadir, in an interview for this research.

¹⁴⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, December 20, 197, cited in FBIS, December 21, 197, p. T6.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Deputy RCC Chairman Babikir Awadallah. The reasons for the RCC's decision are discussed below.

¹⁴⁸ Despite the importance of the issue, there did not seem to be hard feelings against the Sudan at the time, although Sudanese representative on the higher planning committee RCC member Zein al Abdin M. A. Abd al Gadir maintains that this was the beginning of the Sudan's long and complex problems with Libya. Interview with RCC member Zein al Abdin M. A. Abd al Gadir. Sadat was not angry

April 17, 1971.¹⁴⁸ The leaders of Egypt, Libya and Syria had told Nimeiri that they were not going to make any major move, and so the Sudanese side was unpleasantly surprised by the announcement from Tripoli.¹⁴⁹ Nimeiri officially wished the FAR well, declaring the Sudan's intention to join it as soon as it "completes constitutional construction and establishes constitutional institutions in the country", referring to a permanent constitution and the establishment of a strong political organization as the conditions for the Sudan's merger.¹⁵⁰ The Sudan continued to send representatives to meetings of the three FAR members and good bilateral relations prevailed among the four nations for the rest of the 1969-1971 period.

There are several reasons for the demise of the Sudan's participation in the Tripoli Charter, although the most compelling is the straightforward and generally-held view that the FAR was "born dead" because of the fundamental differences between the Libyan and Sudanese notions of unity.¹⁵¹ The death of Nasser played a major role as well.¹⁵² The Sudanese were convinced that he not only understood

when informed of the Sudan's decision in March 1971. Interview with Deputy RCC Chairman Babikir Awadallah.

¹⁴⁹ "We expected such things from Libya, but not from Egypt and we were angry about it." Interview with a member of the RCC.

¹⁵⁰ Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, April 19, 1971, cited in FBIS, April 19, p. T1. 1971.

¹⁵¹ The phrase "born dead" is that of Foreign Minister Farouk Abu Isa, but it is echoed by members of the RCC and Foreign Ministry officials who were involved in the Tripoli Charter negotiations. Interviews with Foreign Minister Farouk Abu Isa, RCC members, and officials of the Foreign Ministry.

¹⁵² One RCC member suggested that the outcome of the Tripoli Charter would have been entirely different if Nasser had not died when he did. Interview with a member of the RCC.

their point of view on the concept of unity, but also shared it.¹⁵³ After his death RCC members felt that Sadat was more interested in "making a splash" and showing he could succeed where Nasser had failed than he was concerned for Arab unity.¹⁵⁴ Another factor was that Sadat did not have the ability to restrain and influence Qadafi that his predecessor had had, and therefore was unable to play the role Nasser had played, even if he had wanted to do so.

The situation was complicated for the RCC by the fact that unity with Egypt and Libya was a concept vehemently opposed within the Sudan both by the southern Sudanese and by the CPS. The southerners opposed the union for the obvious reasons that it would put them in an even more vulnerable position within an already predominantly Arab/Muslim country. Southerners had been opposing the concept of the "unity of the Nile Valley" since before the Sudan's independence and this position was no novelty to them.¹⁵⁵ The CPS leadership also opposed the FAR.¹⁵⁶ Its ostensible reasons were that it was an action which had not been submitted for popular approval, but undoubtedly the specter of union with anti-communist Libya and Egypt (where the communist party had been sternly repressed) could not have been appealing to them. Even moderate members of the pro-government wing

¹⁵³ Interview with members of the RCC, including Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Some observers feel that southern Sudanese opposition to the FAR had no influence on the matter. Interviews with Ahmad Suleiman and Mohamed Omer Beshir.

¹⁵⁶ See The Struggle in the Sudanese Communist Party, Translations on the Near East, no. 647, (Springfield, Virginia: National Technical Information Service, August 31, 1971)

of the CPS like Foreign Minister Farouk Abu Isa were uneasy about the concept of the FAR as they felt that there was democracy in the incipient "popular organizations" in the Sudan while this was not the case in Egypt; they felt Nasser did not really believe in such organizations.¹⁵⁷ For the CPS, opposition to the FAR might have been considered a matter of survival as an organization.

Pitting the enthusiasm of the Arab nationalists against the opposition of the CPS, the Tripoli Charter was the one of the major issues of the period which seriously divided the RCC.¹⁵⁸ The position on unity adopted by the Sudan from the beginning -- slow, step-wise integration leading ultimately to constitutional unity -- perhaps allayed the immediate opposition of the communists on the RCC by delaying constitutional union indefinitely, while at the same time satisfying the Arab nationalists by presenting a mature, detailed plan for unity which promised more likelihood of success than previous attempts or Libya's plan for "instant union." The change in the equation in the Tripoli Charter negotiations resulting from the accession of Syria to the group and the death of Nasser, however, made the Sudan's views on union irrelevant within the negotiations, as the

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Foreign Minister Farouk Abu Isa.

¹⁵⁸ RCC members remember this differently. One says that the two CPS members on the RCC never said that they opposed the Tripoli Charter. Another RCC member suggests that they did oppose it. It is known that the CPS opposed it, and it is known that both officers were part of hard-line CPS Secretary-General Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub's faction of the party. So it is most likely that Babikir al Nur and Hashim al Atta did oppose the plans for unity with Egypt and Libya, but perhaps they kept their opposition at a low-key level within the RCC. This interpretation is supported by the fact that, until November 1970, the Sudanese approach was that unity lay far in the future, so it would not have been necessary for the two CPS members on the RCC to make their opposition to the Tripoli Charter felt. Interview with members of the RCC.

other three states rushed toward immediate union. It may also have been the trigger for the dismissal of three members of the RCC on November 16, 1970. Although RCC Chairman Nimeiri denied that the Tripoli Charter had anything to do with the dismissal of the two CPS members (Lt. Col. Babikir al Nur and Maj. Hashim al Atta) and their colleague (Maj. Farouk Osman Hamadallah) from the RCC, the timing and coincidence of several factors is suggestive that it may have played at least a catalytic role: (1) the strong opposition of the CPS to the FAR; (2) the major new step toward union adopted at the tripartite summit on November 8, 1970; (3) the fierce criticism of the FAR by the CPS from Beirut two weeks later; (4) comments by Maj. Farouk Osman Hamadallah after his dismissal that the rest of the RCC had been in the dark about the steps taken on November 8 until RCC members Nimeiri, Zein al Abdin M. A. Abd al Gadir, and Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid returned from Cairo; (5) and the date of the dismissal of the three RCC members on November 16, 1970 -- a week after the reluctant Sudanese agreement to moves toward actual unity -- presumably because they were leaking RCC discussions to the CPS, when the communist affiliation of two of them, and their leaking of information had been known for some time.¹⁵⁹

The root of the Sudan's policy toward union is not precisely clear, but certainly even the most fervent Arab nationalists on the RCC never had in mind more than "some kind of economic union, like the Common

¹⁵⁹ Not only Nimeiri but also other RCC members deny that the Tripoli Charter had anything to do with the dismissals from the RCC, but the coincidence of the timing of their dismissal with the big step on the Tripoli Charter negotiation is very striking, particularly since the ostensible reason for their dismissal -- leaking RCC deliberations to the CPS -- had been going on for some time and known to their colleagues for some time as well.

Market."¹⁶⁰ With the resistance of the communists on the RCC allayed by the very long-term nature of the unification process, the Sudanese position was probably the only approach to union with other Arab states which could have kept peace within the RCC, an equilibrium which was upset by the decisions made in the November 1970 tripartite summit. The Sudanese decision in March 1971 not to join the immediate union with Egypt, Libya and Syria was only a natural consequence of its whole policy toward union, and the only sensible option in view of the fact that the RCC was deeply concerned with its on-going efforts to resolve the southern conflict.

There is a certain irony to the story of the Sudan's involvement in the Tripoli Charter. If detailed preparation is an indication of intent, the Sudan may have been the most serious of the three states about some kind of integration. The members of the RCC and the Foreign Ministry officials who drafted the Sudanese working papers were keenly aware of the failure of previous plans for Arab unity, and eager to avoid a repetition of these abortive unions. Yet the Sudan was the first to withdraw from the merger precisely because its own approach was too slow and subtle for an impulsive Qadafi and a self-conscious Sadat who was trying to emerge from the shadow of Nasser. Ironically, also, it was the Sudan which came out of the affair with the most credit for pulling back from what turned out after all to be just another ephemeral Arab merger.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Babikir Awadallah.

The final manifestation of Sudanese policy toward Egypt during this period was never a matter of articulated policy. The institutions, symbols, and rhetoric of the new government, however, were unmistakably similar to those of the Egyptian "Revolution" of 1952. The degree to which the RCC emulated Nasser and the Egyptian example amply illustrates the degree to which the majority of Sudanese RCC members were personally and politically attached to the Egyptian President. The similarities were hard to miss: the Free Officers' organization, the Revolutionary Command Council, the National Charter, the Sudanese Socialist Union (which made its debut following the coup of 1971 but which was planned during the 1969-1971 period), the new flag and even many of the slogans.

It is interesting to note that, despite the government's avowed desire to redirect its trade toward the Arab world and its economic integration agreement with Egypt, trade between the two countries during this period showed very little change from the preceding period.¹⁶¹ No Sudanese government had had openly hostile relations with Egypt for any prolonged period; many had had very good relations. None had enjoyed the extraordinarily high level of relations which flowered in the 1969-1971 period, perhaps because no previous government had had a policy so closely allied to that of Egypt or had been peopled with so many key decision-makers who were certain that

¹⁶¹ The Egyptian share of Sudanese exports, which had ranged from 3.0 percent to 4.0 percent in the 1965-68 period, grew only from 3.8 percent in 1969 to 5.4 percent in 1970 and dropped back to 5.0 percent in 1971. Egypt's share of Sudanese imports, which had ranged in 1965-68 from 3.8 percent to 4.0 percent, increased only to 4.3 percent in 1969, 5.5 percent in 1970 and 5.9 percent in 1971. See Appendix A for detailed information on Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

only Egypt would stand beside the Sudanese government come what may.

The RCC's faith in Egypt was well founded. Nimeiri noted at the end of 1969 that Egypt had provided ten million Sudanese pounds in military training and other goods and services in the first few months of the new government.¹⁶² During the period of the greatest internal threat up to July 1971, the Egyptian government had backed up its friendship with action: it had readily sent military personnel and probably one or more aircraft to support the RCC's action at Aba Island in March 1970. Much of the intimacy with Egypt on the part of the non-communist members of the RCC was due to personal attachment to Nasser. These feelings began to change after his death, but serious differences with Sadat did not appear until after the July 1971 coup attempt.

Libya

Until September 1, 1969 the Sudan's northwest neighbor was, as far as the RCC was concerned, no more than another Arab state with which good relations should be maintained for reasons of Arab solidarity. Although Tripoli was included among the Arab capitals visited by representatives of the RCC in June 1969, no serious attention was paid to Libya until the September 1969 coup brought to power a group of young officers who appeared to be very similar to the Sudanese RCC in age, experience and ideology.

¹⁶² Omdurman Domestic Service, November 30, 1969, cited in FBIS, December 1, 1969, pp. T1-10.

The new government was recognized on the morning following the coup and a few days later a Sudanese delegation was in Libya to congratulate the new leaders. A government spokesman in Khartoum declared that the aims of the new Libyan government were "similar to those of the Revolution of 26 May."¹⁶³ Before the new Libyan government had been in power a month, it was cooperating with the Sudan at the September 1969 Islamic summit on the proposal that the Islamic states clearly associate themselves with the Palestinian fedayeen and that the conference examine with severity the question of Islamic states that maintained diplomatic relations with Israel.¹⁶⁴ Although the proposals were not successful, they marked the debut of the new Libyan government in the "progressive" Arab camp which the Sudan joined after its own "revolution" in May 1969.

Warm relations between the two countries developed very rapidly. Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah declared in September 1969 that the

Sudan is prepared to cooperate fully with its sister Libyan Arab Republic, because the aims of the two revolutions are identical and the fraternal feelings between the two peoples are strong and eternal.¹⁶⁵

RCC member Zein al Abdin M. A. Abd al Gadir said on behalf of the RCC that the Sudan would use its military to "defend the Libyan revolution in the event of foreign intervention" and he confirmed that this had

¹⁶³ Arab Report and Record, September 1-16, 1969.

¹⁶⁴ Agence France Presse, Paris, September 24, 1969, cited in FBIS, September 24, 1969, p. T7.

¹⁶⁵ Bayda Domestic Service, Tripoli, September 8, 1969, cited in FBIS, September 11, 1969, p. T9.

¹⁶⁶ Agence France Presse, Paris, September 12, 1969, cited in FBIS,

been communicated to the Libyan RCC.¹⁶⁶ In October 1969 RCC member Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid was back in Tripoli with a ministerial delegation to discuss the strengthening of economic relations and Libyan RCC member Abdel Salem Jalloud visited Khartoum for the October Revolution celebration.¹⁶⁷ In November 1969 RCC Chairman Nimeiri visited Libya for talks with Qadafi. He reported afterward that Egypt, Libya and the Sudan had agreed on coordination of trade, improvement of relations and a summit to be held in Tripoli in December and he noted that he had asked Libya for short- and long-term loans totalling about forty million Sudanese pounds.¹⁶⁸

On December 25, 1969 the Tripoli Charter was signed, setting in motion a series of meetings and summits over the next sixteen months until April 1971 when the Sudan formally withdrew from the union. Visits were made back and forth not only by Nimeiri and Qadafi, but also by other members of both nations' RCCs, ministers and lower-level officials. Despite these personal contacts, however, there was no evidence of any bilateral agreements or protocols signed. Unlike the relationship with Egypt, the Sudan's ties to Libya appeared to be more a matter of personal contact and rhetoric than of substance. While the Sudan and Egypt had a strong bilateral relationship outside of the Tripoli Charter, the Charter appeared to be the basis for the relationship between the Sudan and Libya. There was little contact between the Sudan and Libya during this period outside of the

September 16, 1969, p. T9.

¹⁶⁷ Arab Report and Record, October 1-15 and October 16-31, 1969.

¹⁶⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, November 27, 1969, cited in FBIS, December 1, 1969, pp. T1-10.

framework of the Tripoli Charter negotiations.

Syria

Relations with Syria were among the closest of any Arab state other than Egypt and Libya. In September 1969 a Syrian government and party delegation conferred in Khartoum with their Sudanese counterparts on "Arab issues." Following the meetings RCC Chairman Nimeiri thanked Syria for its support of the Sudanese revolution since its inception. The Syrians called the visit the first step in establishing the kind of strong relationship which must link the two countries.¹⁶⁹ A cultural agreement was signed in October 1969 and in December, following conversations with the Syrian representative at the Rabat Arab summit, Nimeiri declared that the views of the Sudan and Syria were identical.¹⁷⁰

In April 1970 Syria and the Sudan agreed to set up a joint committee to study means of increasing trade and industrial cooperation; bilateral trade, however, remained at a very low level.¹⁷¹ In November 1970 RCC member and Defense Minister Khalid Hassan Abbas led a delegation to Damascus to congratulate Hafez Assad on taking over the government of Syria. Returning from a visit to Syria, Deputy RCC Chairman Babikir Awadallah commented that the

¹⁶⁹ Damascus Domestic Service, September 17, 1969, and Omdurman Domestic Service, September 19, 1969, both cited in FBIS, September 23, 1969, p. T10.

¹⁷⁰ Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1969. Although such statements were not uncommon in relations with "friendly" states, they were notable oftentimes for their absence as much for their presence.

¹⁷¹ See Appendix C for detailed information on Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

accession of Syria to the Tripoli Charter was a "positive step" which had been greeted with joy by the people of Syria.¹⁷²

As with the other members of the FAR, the Syrians were not apparently upset at the Sudan's decision not to join the federation, and the RCC did not hold it against Syria that it had followed Qadafi's line on immediate union. There were warm personal relations between the Chairman of the Sudanese RCC and Assad, for whom Nimeiri had high regard.¹⁷³ Other than the agreements noted, however, the relationship between the Sudan and Syria was relatively insubstantial.

Iraq, Algeria, North Yemen and the PLO

Relations with Iraq, Algeria and North Yemen were similar: good but not close. Nimeiri enjoyed good personal relations with both Boumedienne of Algeria and Iryani of North Yemen.

One of the most important elements moving closer to the Arab "progressive" camp and to general Arab solidarity was the new government's support of the Palestinian movement. While the Sudan was not in a position to offer much material aid to the PLO, the new government promised from the beginning to do whatever it could to support the PLO politically:

We...note with pride that the Palestinian revolution has taken long strides toward uniting the resistance organizations and escalating the fedayeen action to the stage of cohesion with the struggle of the Arab masses

¹⁷² Damascus Domestic Service, November 28, 1970, cited in FBIS, November 30, 1970, p. T7.

¹⁷³ One close observer suggests that Nimeiri regarded Assad as officer of high calibre and experience, while he viewed Qadafi as very young and inexperienced, and felt that Sadat had never particularly distinguished himself as an officer. Interview with Ahmad Suleiman.

inside and outside the Arab territory... The Revolution Government will do its utmost to fully mobilize all its sources and to arm and recruit the masses to place them all in the service of the Palestinian question. It will also extend material and political support to the fedayeen action.¹⁷⁴

The PLO was given broadcast facilities in the Sudan and training activities were carried out by PLO groups in the Sudan as well.¹⁷⁵ PLO Chairman Arafat, visiting Khartoum in June 1969, was assured by the Prime Minister that the new government intended to support them materially and morally.¹⁷⁶ Support for the Palestinians was carried by the Sudan to regional and international conferences, such as the Islamic Summit of September 1969 where the Libyan and Sudanese delegations strongly supported full PLO representation, rather than just observer status.¹⁷⁷

Strains developed in Sudanese relations with the PLO after Nasser's acceptance of the Rogers Plan. PLO broadcasts were suspended after they had violently attacked Nasser. After Foreign Minister Farouk Abu Isa's talks with Arafat in Beirut, the broadcasts were resumed, then broken off again by the PLO because of Sudanese censorship. The Sudan asked that the PLO representative in Khartoum be replaced as the former representative had carried the PLO attack on acceptance of the

¹⁷⁴ Speech by Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah, Omdurman Domestic Service, May 25, 1969, cited in FBIS, May 26, 1969, p. T5.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with a member of the RCC and with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

¹⁷⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 13, 1969, cited in FBIS, June 15, 1969, p. T3.

¹⁷⁷ Statement by Delegation Head Khalafallah Babikir, Omdurman Domestic Service, September 25, 1969, cited in FBIS, September 30, 1969, p. T11.

Rogers Plan in speeches around Khartoum, including the University.¹⁷⁸ Relations between the Sudan and the PLO did not remain hostile after this incident, but they did not again achieve the felicity of the early days of 1969. Undoubtedly the reason for the relatively friendly relations after this incident was the Sudan's policy toward the Jordanian-Palestinian conflict, which was very supportive of the PLO.

Jordan

Relations with Jordan were friendly, if insubstantial, until the fighting broke out in September 1970 between the Palestinians and the Jordanian army. In the same month Nimeiri headed the Arab mediation mission to Jordan which succeeded in bringing about a ceasefire. The tone of subsequent remarks by Sudanese officials clearly showed that Sudanese policy was more sympathetic to the Palestinians than to King Hussein. Upon his return to Khartoum, Nimeiri deplored the "mass killing of peaceful, innocent Palestinians" and promised the Sudan would "adopt firm measures" against the Jordanian government to "ensure the implementation of the Cairo accord."¹⁷⁹ The Foreign Minister, who had accompanied Nimeiri on the mediation mission, was even more direct. He declared that the Sudan would impose a "diplomatic and political boycott" on Jordan if it failed to live up to the accord.¹⁸⁰ He added that the mediation mission had "secured the continuity of Palestinian resistance" by removing Arafat to Cairo

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Farouk Abu Isa. See above, section on policy toward Egypt.

¹⁷⁹ Arab Report and Record, September 16-31, 1970.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

"away from the threat posed to him in Amman."¹⁸¹ The sporadic outbreaks of conflict in Jordan which continued for some months never elicited the same level of response and little attention was paid publicly to the Jordanian-Palestinian problem or to Jordan itself for the remainder of this period.

Kuwait

The Sudan adopted a friendly policy toward the small Arab states of the Gulf, particularly Kuwait. A Kuwaiti economic delegation visited Khartoum in March 1971. The two sides discussed opening a Sudanese industrial and agricultural fair in Kuwait, agreed on the formation of a permanent committee for development investment in the Sudan from Kuwait, and Kuwait agreed to provide fertilizers to the Sudan on concessional terms.¹⁸² Sudanese interest in Kuwait appeared to increase toward the end of the 1969-1971 period, perhaps because of the increasing political experience of the RCC with economic problems in the Sudan. At the May 1971 anniversary of the "May Revolution" Kuwait was the only Arab state other than Egypt and Libya which was mentioned in RCC Chairman Nimeiri's address: he lauded Kuwait's efforts to create a cohesive Arab state in the Gulf region.¹⁸³

Saudi Arabia

The most hostile policy within the Arab world was directed at Saudi Arabia, which was perceived as conspiring with the Ansar against the new government because of the friendly relationship between Saudi

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1971.

¹⁸³ Omdurman Domestic Service, May 25, 1971, cited in FBIS, May 26, 1971, pp. T1-4.

Arabian King Faisal and the Imam al Hadi. Even with this, however, the RCC was determined to limit the damage to relations with the Saudis and took a relatively soft line in response to evidence of Saudi knowledge of the "Aba Island conspiracy."

When the RCC first came to power its policy toward the Saudis was no less friendly than toward any of the other "conservative" Arab states. It was only after the the regime's confrontation with the Ansar at Aba Island in March 1970 that its relations with Saudi Arabia became hostile. At first Saudi support of the Ansar rebellion were only referred to obliquely. RCC member and Minister of Local Government Maj. Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim mentioned the role of a "reactionary Arab state" in conjunction with Ethiopia and the United States, a statement which was followed by a Saudi denial.¹⁸⁴ Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Farouk Abu Isa said

Saudi Arabia has always interfered, and continues to do so, in Sudan's internal affairs by its association with, and support for, reactionary elements,

and he said he had proof that the Saudis had known in advance of the "Aba conspiracy."¹⁸⁵

A few days later the RCC Deputy Chairman reiterated that Saudi Arabia had known of the planned revolt in advance and that he had met King Faisal at the Islamic Summit to discuss "anti-Sudanese" activities conducted from Saudi Arabia.¹⁸⁶ He said that he did not

¹⁸⁴ Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1970.

¹⁸⁵ Omdurman Domestic Service, April 7, 1970, cited in FBIS, April 8, 1970, p. T3.

¹⁸⁶ Agence France Presse, Paris, April 9, 1970, cited in FBIS, April 10, 1970, p. T3.

receive the response he had expected and that Saudi attitudes toward the Sudanese revolution did not further the mutual interests of the two countries.¹⁸⁷ Only a few days later, Babikir Awadallah said that relations between the Sudan and Saudi Arabia would be reappraised after an investigation of the events at Aba Island. He added that when he had seen King Faisal, the King had "accused the regime of apostasy and ... repeated, 'infidelity, infidelity, infidelity'..."¹⁸⁸

The evidence on which the Sudanese government based its charge of Saudi involvement in the incidents at Aba Island were letters between King Faisal and the Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi.¹⁸⁹ It is notable that the RCC did not, despite its accusations, publish these letters to back up denunciations of Saudi complicity. Instead they sent Brig. (ret.) Omer al-Haj Mousa, Minister of National Guidance and a trusted associate of RCC members, to tell the Saudis that the Sudan had this evidence but was not going to publish it. There may have been an element of both subtle blackmail and pragmatism in this action, as the Sudanese were already keenly aware that sooner or later they were going to need Saudi financial aid.¹⁹⁰ Despite this discretion, the Sudan kept up the pressure on the Saudis, neither playing their trump card, nor allowing the Saudis to forget that they had it. In June 1970 RCC member and Interior Minister Farouk Osman Hamadallah reported

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Syrian News Agency, Damascus, April 12, 1970, cited in FBIS, April 13, 1970, p. T6.

¹⁸⁹ This account was provided by former Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid in an interview for this research.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. However, an RCC member suggests that they weren't thinking of future Saudi financial aid at all in this connection. Interview with a member of the RCC.

Saudi financial aid to the Ansar at about two hundred-thousand Sudanese pounds.¹⁹¹ He confirmed that Sudanese government contacts on this subject had begun well before the Aba Island confrontation and that the Sudan still hoped

these contacts will bring about a firm basis for good and close relations with these countries {Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia} ... uncovering facts not intended to defame ... but at showing desire to achieve good neighborliness and open a new page in relations with these states.¹⁹²

Saudi Arabia was one of the few Arab countries with which the Sudan had any measurable trade relationship, although it was relatively small. The volume of trade between the two countries did not change significantly in this period.¹⁹³

Policy toward the non-Arab African states

The need for a diplomatic effort among African nations was clear to the RCC upon taking power, primarily because of the high priority given to solution of the southern conflict, but also because of fear of encirclement by hostile, pro-Western African states.¹⁹⁴ Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah expressed his concern for African policy in terms of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which was the cornerstone of his attitude to foreign policy issues:

¹⁹¹ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 24, 1970, cited in FBIS, June 25, 1970, pp. T7-8.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ The Saudi share of Sudanese exports never exceeded 4 percent in the entire 1965-1971 period, and it was usually less, as was the Saudi share of Sudanese imports. See Appendix C for detailed information on Sudanese trade 1969-1971.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with a member of the RCC.

Revolutionary Sudan will give strong support to the movements of liberation from imperialism and neoimperialism, and to the fierce war against racist discrimination everywhere and against Zionist infiltration in the African continent, for it is aware of the association between imperialism and world Zionism. Within this framework, Sudan will extend its hand to all governments and peoples, particularly African, with whom it is tied by bonds of fraternity and neighborliness. It will seek the friendship of all and will be hostile only to those who are hostile to it.¹⁹⁵

Perhaps the strongest indication of the importance attached to developing an African policy -- and of the relationship of this new policy to the resolution of the southern Sudan conflict -- was the appointment in March 1970 of Mohamed Omer Beshir, the most prominent Sudanese scholar on the southern conflict and Secretary-General of the 1965 Round Table Conference, to head a new African department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. African affairs had hitherto been handled by a one-man African desk staffed by a first or second secretary. Ambassador Mohamed Omer Beshir was to report directly to the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (a friend and former student of his), and through him to the RCC.¹⁹⁶

Concern among members of the RCC for resolution of the southern problem, fear of encirclement, anti-imperialism and socialism all played a role in the new regime's African policy. As most RCC officers had served in the south, they were well aware that the problem was not going to be solved through force alone, and that most of the outside assistance to the southern Sudanese fighters, the anya nya, was coming through Ethiopia and Uganda. Taking exactly the

¹⁹⁵ Speech by Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah, May 25, 1969.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Mohamed Omer Beshir.

opposite tack from the Abboud regime, which had played a low-key role in Africa to avoid African criticism of the government's southern policy, the RCC felt impelled by the southern problem to achieve good relations, not only with the Sudan's neighbors, but also with other African states.¹⁹⁷ Anti-imperialism fit in well with this policy, as this was one of the themes on which all African states could agree in principle. The socialist orientation of the RCC made it natural to find close friends among the more radical African states.

All of these factors led the RCC to adopt an African policy composed of four major dimensions: (1) joining the 'radical club' of the OAU, both for coordination within the OAU and for support on the southern problem; (2) aid to the liberation movements of Africa, both as an end in itself, and to bolster the Sudan's credentials as a radical African nation fighting imperialism in the continent as a whole and at home (emphasizing the connection between imperialism and the southern Sudan problems); (3) efforts through the multi-lateral organizations that included most African nations (the OAU and the non-aligned movement) to promote the Arab cause in Africa; and (4) formal negotiations and informal contacts with the neighboring states in an effort to achieve good relations both for purposes of achieving a solution to the southern conflict and of overall national security.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ Interview with a member of the RCC and with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Farouk Abu Isa.

¹⁹⁸ This categorization of African policy was suggested in an interview for this research with Mohamed Omer Beshir.

At the 1970 OAU summit RCC Chairman Nimeiri met for the first time most of the African heads of state and particularly made friends with the heads of state of Tanzania, Uganda, and Somalia and some of the socialists. It was natural for the Sudan to join an informal "radical club" which included thirteen of the African progressives.¹⁹⁹ Their relationship was never one of organized, formal meetings, but they met before, during and after OAU summits to organize and discuss common policy. The Sudan's membership in this group helped promote its activist image in Africa and it was through friends in this group that the new government came into closer contact with the African liberation groups.²⁰⁰

When the RCC came to power in 1969 the Sudan was in arrears in its payments to the OAU and had not paid its subscription to the OAU fund for the liberation movements. Although it did not have the money to help these movements financially, the idea was broached to provide items or facilities other than money, such as uniforms, food and training.²⁰¹ In the case of Mozambique's Frelimo, the Sudan also provided arms (from those captured at Aba Island); to Neto's NPLA of Angola the Sudan gave training and facilities; to the liberation movement for Portuguese Guinea, guns and ammunition were provided.²⁰² These contributions were considered in-kind contributions in lieu of

¹⁹⁹ Egypt, Algeria, Somalia, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Congo (Brazzaville), Mali, Guinea, and Niger, with Nigeria brought in on some issues and Tanzania and Algeria playing the leading role as far as the Sudan was concerned. Interview with Mohamed Omer Beshir.

²⁰⁰ ibid.

²⁰¹ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

²⁰² ibid.

financial assistance through the OAU fund, and in many cases the Sudanese contribution exceeded what it was required to give.

In other ways as well the Sudanese government went as far as it could to support the African liberation movements. It was announced in August 1969 that the government would place all of its information media at the disposal of the liberation movements of Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, Southwest Africa, and South Africa and that the Sudan had decided to work toward strengthening the position of these movements in the OAU.²⁰³ The Sudan also welcomed the opening of offices in Khartoum by the liberation movements of Portugal's African colonies.²⁰⁴ On a political and organizational level, the Sudan was one of the nations spearheading the efforts at the Khartoum conference of the East and Central African nations in January 1970 to move away from the Lusaka Manifesto adopted the year before which had called for a policy of negotiation with Portugal and the white-majority governments. The emphasis was changed to providing substantial increases in aid to the liberation movements instead of urging negotiations.²⁰⁵

At the 1970 OAU summit and again at the 1971 Lusaka meeting of the non-aligned movement, a major priority of the Sudanese government was to promote African concern about the Palestinian issue. The fact that the Sudan had developed greater prominence in African affairs, was a

²⁰³ Agence France Presse, Paris, August 12, 1970, cited in FBIS, August 14, 1970, pp. T3-4.

²⁰⁴ Agence France Presse, July 13, 1970, cited in FBIS, July 14, 1970, p. T3.

²⁰⁵ Agence France Presse, January 27, 1970, cited in FBIS, January 28, 1970, p. S2.

friend of influential radical states, had made contributions to the African liberation movements , and had clearly adopted a more reasonable attitude toward the resolution of the southern problem, all made the Sudan's efforts to persuade the Africans on the Arab-Israeli issue more plausible, though evidence of greater African interest in the Palestinian problem was not immediately forthcoming.

Although these three elements of the government's African policy were important, for both practical and ideological reasons, the most significant aspect of African policy was the achievement of harmonious relations with the neighboring states to facilitate resolution of the southern conflict. The fact that the Sudanese government had, within two weeks of its accession to power, declared its willingness to negotiate with the southerners and grant some kind of regional autonomy may well have made the neighbors more willing to enter into discussions with the Sudan. They may also have been encouraged by the Sudan's July 20, 1969 statement that it would not allow "political refugees" from neighboring countries to commit any hostile acts against the safety and integrity of OAU member countries:

The Sudan does not export revolutions to other countries... we will not interfere in the affairs of others, and we will not give any country the opportunity to interfere in our affairs or with our borders. That is, we will not be the ones to start such interference.²⁰⁶

Concern with borders -- natural for a nation with eight neighbors -- and the necessity of a practical approach to the neighboring states, may have been underlined for the officers of the RCC by the disastrous outcome of the 1964-1965 transitional governments' decision

²⁰⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 17, 1969, cited in FBIS, August 18, 1969, p. T1.

to aid rebels from neighboring states: arms permitted to pass through the Sudan to Congolese Simbas had ended up in the hands of the southern Sudanese. The foreign weapons found at Aba Island also heightened the officers' concern for borders. In May 1970 Interior Minister Farouk Osman Hamadallah said that the RCC was planning to set up a border guard and tighten border controls.²⁰⁷

Ethiopia

Since the beginning of the Sudanese civil war in 1955, Ethiopia played an increasingly significant role in the Sudan's affairs, with its intermittent support of southern forces. Coupled with the still-unresolved question of Ethiopia's own struggle with secessionist Eritrea, Sudanese policy toward Ethiopia was an important and sensitive problem for the new government. Border problems had also plagued the relationship between the two nations since before Sudanese independence and were still unresolved when the new government came to power in 1969. The fact that Emperor Haile Selassie was a close friend of the American government made the problem no less complex.

As early as July 1969 the Sudan dispatched a goodwill mission headed by the Minister of Agriculture to Ethiopia to explain to the Emperor the aims and policies of the new government. In a July 1969 press conference Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Babikir Awadallah said that the delegation had

now returned with good impressions. There are no border problems because the present border is based on agreements.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ Agence France Presse, Paris, May 19, 1970, cited in FBIS, May 22, 1970, p. T5.

²⁰⁸ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, cited in FBIS, July 29, 1969, pp.

More important were Nimeiri's two meetings with Haile Selassie when he was in Addis Ababa for the 1969 OAU summit. Both meetings were cordial and the problem of the border (not yet resolved, despite the Prime Minister's optimism) was raised between the two.²⁰⁹ The dialogue was continued on a diplomatic level and further talks were held when the Emperor was in Khartoum in January 1970 for the meeting of the East and Central African states. Following this conference direct telecommunications links with Ethiopia were restored after several years interruption, in accordance with the conference resolutions.²¹⁰ Despite the brief hostility on the part of the Sudan following the March 1970 confrontation at Aba Island, in which the Sudanese government said Ethiopia was involved, relations did not deteriorate significantly. What is significant is that of the three nations accused by the Sudan of aiding the Ansar -- the United States, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia -- the United States was subjected to the most severe rhetorical attack, Saudi Arabia was criticized more mildly, and Ethiopia's role was only mentioned briefly.

On May 29, 1970 Foreign Minister and Deputy RCC Chairman Babikir Awadallah met with Nasser and Haile Selassie in Cairo. The discussion centered on Ethiopian activities in southern Sudan.²¹¹ Nasser had been pressing Haile Selassie to end aid to the southerners, and had told the Emperor that the Sudan was more important to him than the

T3-5.

²⁰⁹ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

²¹⁰ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, March 20, 1970, cited in FBIS, March 23, p. T5.

²¹¹ Interview with Babikir Awadallah.

Sinai.²¹²

By far the most important development in Sudanese-Ethiopian relations during this period, and perhaps the most significant achievement of the new government's African policy was the signing of a major agreement with Ethiopia in March 1971 following the visit of the Ethiopian Foreign Minister to Khartoum. The two governments agreed to take all measures necessary to end subversive activities against each other by rebel forces, to disarm rebel forces and disband their camps, to create two joint commissions to inspect rebel emplacements on both sides of the border, and to remove refugee camps to at least fifty miles from the border.²¹³ Offices of the Eritrean guerillas in Khartoum were closed and to the extent possible arms transshipments to Eritrean groups via the Sudan were stopped.²¹⁴ Discussions on the thorny border dispute were continued and reached temporary settlement in July 1972.²¹⁵

The end of mutual support of one another's separatists did not seem to create hostility between the Sudanese and the Eritreans or between the Ethiopians and the southern Sudanese. In the case of Ethiopia and the southern Sudanese, Haile Selassie was able to play a constructive

²¹² Interview with a member of the RCC.

²¹³ Agreement between the Imperial Ethiopian Government and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, 24 March, 1971, Khartoum (Foreign Ministry Archives).

²¹⁴ "The Eritreans were still here but kept a low profile. We convinced them that these steps were in our mutual best interest." Interview with Mohamed Omer Beshir.

²¹⁵ For a detailed discussion of legal aspects of the 1972 border agreement, see Faisal Abdel Rahman Ali Taha, Settlement of the Sudan-Ethiopia Boundary Dispute, (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1975)

role in the Addis Ababa negotiations in 1972, and Eritrean groups were still to be found in Khartoum. The importance of the 1971 Sudanese-Ethiopian treaty in the government's policy of attaining good relations with its neighbors and neutralizing their support for the southern Sudanese cannot be overestimated.

Uganda

There were no outstanding problems between Uganda and the Sudan when the government changed in Khartoum in May 1969 and that remained the case until Ugandan President Milton Obote was overthrown in January 1971 by Idi Amin. Nimeiri had established friendly personal relations with Obote at his first OAU summit in September 1969 and relations were low-key, but friendly, despite allegations (from outside the Sudan) that Israeli equipment was reaching the southern Sudanese through Uganda.²¹⁶ It is unlikely that Obote, a friend of Nimeiri and himself from the northern part of Uganda bordering the Sudan, would have chosen to stir up trouble that could spill over into his own area. Cordial relations with Obote continued, because the RCC was convinced that the aid to the southern Sudanese was coming through Idi Amin, Obote's Minister of Defense, without Obote's knowledge.²¹⁷

Returning from his August 1969 visit to Kampala, Minister of Southern Affairs Joseph Garang said that Obote had promised that he was ready to help make the Sudan's new southern policy a success, and that Obote had urged Sudanese refugees in Uganda to return to their homes to share in the progress and development of their country.

²¹⁶ London Sunday Times, March 1, 1970, cited in Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1970.

²¹⁷ Interview with Babikir Awadallah.

Garang said that Obote had declared that he would not allow Sudanese dissidents to work against the Sudan's interests and security.²¹⁸ Ideological affinity also underlay the Sudan's friendly policy toward the Obote government. In November 1969 Nimieiri sent a message to Obote applauding his new policy of achieving socialism in Uganda, and assuring him that the Sudan was ready to assist in every possible field.²¹⁹

In August 1970 a large Sudanese delegation visited Kampala. A trade agreement was signed and talks were held with the Ugandan ministers of Defense, Interior and Foreign Affairs on the subject of the southern Sudan conflict. The Sudanese side reported that a joint technical committee for refugee affairs would continue to meet and that the results of the talks were mutually beneficial.²²⁰

Only days before his overthrow by Idi Amin, Obote handed over to the Sudan the German-born mercenary Rolf Steiner, whom the Sudan accused of training the southerners and acting as a link between them and their "imperialist masters in the United States, West Germany and Israel."²²¹ This was very important to the Sudanese government: Steiner was perceived as a major connection between the West and the southern rebels and was, as a mercenary, also regarded as a symbol of

²¹⁸ Agence France Presse, Paris, August 7, 1969, cited in FBIS, August 8, 1969, p. T2.

²¹⁹ Agence France Presse, November 4, 1969, cited in FBIS, November 5, 1969, p. T4.

²²⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 26, 1970, cited in FBIS, August 26, 1970, p. T6.

²²¹ Statement by Foreign Minister Farouk Abu Isa, Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1971.

traditional Western interference in Africa.

The advent of Idi Amin's government spelled the end of the good relations between the two countries, and of the positive policy toward Uganda by the Sudanese government. Obote was offered sanctuary in the Sudan as well as in Tanzania and those of his forces he brought with him were housed in army barracks.²²² The Foreign Minister, Farouk Abu Isa was convinced that Obote had been overthrown by Amin because he had moved to the left.²²³ Others were convinced that Obote had antagonized Amin by his closeness to the Sudan and his extradition of Steiner.²²⁴

Sudanese policy following the coup of Amin was the result of both personal and ideological factors. The Sudanese government went to Obote's aid in the early days of the Amin regime not only because of the strong personal relationship between Obote and Nimeiri, and the background of good relations and shared ideology between the two governments, but also because Amin was viewed as a stooge of the West and the spearhead of Israeli penetration into Africa.²²⁵ However the hostility began, it was soon mutual. On January 30, 1971 Amin accused the Sudan of bombing villages in northern Uganda and declared that Sudanese troops had crossed the border; the Sudan denied this and later charges.²²⁶ In late February 1971 Foreign Minister Farouk Abu

²²² Interview with Mansour Khalid.

²²³ Interview with Farouk Abu Isa.

²²⁴ Interview with Mohamed Omer Beshir.

²²⁵ Interviews with Mansour Khalid and Farouk Abu Isa.

²²⁶ Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1971.

Isa clarified the Sudan's position vis a vis the Amin government:

Sudan adheres to a firm stand of noninterference in the internal affairs of other states... We will not allow anyone to drag us by provocations into abandoning these principles, to which we are fully committed. We in Sudan find ourselves face-to-face with a difficult and extremely complex situation. Some have tried to make it appear simple, but in fact we cannot separate the imperialist conspiracies in Uganda against the whole African continent from several other issues, such as those mentioned here and including President Obote's firm effort in connection with Britain's policy on sales of arms to South Africa... Obote courageously and personally responded {to the problem of mercenaries in Africa} by handing over to us the West German Steiner... These are issues which must be taken into account in tackling this problem before we reach a wise decision to ward off any split in our organization {the OAU} ... Amin compared what is going on in the southern Sudan with what is happening in South Africa... We regard this statement blatant interference in our internal affairs... Despite all this... we will not respond to the provocation. We persist in maintaining the fraternal and historical relations between the Sudanese and Ugandan people. We want the officials in Uganda to fully understand this: we in revolutionary Sudan will not stand by with arms folded in the face of interference in the unity and independence of our country and interference in our internal affairs.²²⁷

In April the governments exchanged notes, the Ugandans charging that Ugandan guerillas supporting Obote had crossed into Uganda from Sudan and that if this continued, the Ugandan Government would have to take "defense measures." The Sudan again denied the charge and reiterated its policy of noninterference.²²⁸ In April 1971 Amin took his complaints to the United Nations, and in early May he expelled the Sudanese charge from Kampala.²²⁹ In this midst of this acrimonious exchange, the mercurial Amin told a Sudanese diplomat that he was ready to mediate between the Sudanese government and the southern

²²⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, February 27, 1971, cited in FBIS, March 1, 1971, pp. S2-3.

²²⁸ Arab Report and Record, April 16-31, 1971.

²²⁹ Arab Report and Record, April 15-30, 1971, and May 1-15, 1971.

Sudanese, if both sides were willing.²³⁰ At the end of May 1971, in an atmosphere that continued to be hostile, a statement on Omdurman Radio continued the Sudan's "open door" policy to improved relations with Amin's government, saying that the Sudan

believes that relations between the peoples of Uganda and Sudan are eternal. They are relations of history... neighborliness, and interests. And passing events cannot possibly affect relations... What is happening in that country only concerns its people. They are quite capable.{of dealing with their problems} ... and we, in this spirit, wish them well.²³¹

This statement, reflecting the Sudan's desire to achieve good relations with Uganda despite what it regarded as Ugandan provocations, was the last public statement on Uganda before the coup in the Sudan in July 1971. The problems between the two countries remained unresolved until the post-July 1971 period.

Other Neighboring Countries

While none of the other neighboring countries was considered as important as Ethiopia and Uganda, the new government made efforts to establish and maintain good relations with them. Nimeiri visited Zaire, the Central African Republic, and Chad (twice) and but little attention was devoted to these countries relative to the government's concern for relations with Ethiopia, Uganda and the Arab world.

²³⁰ Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1971.

²³¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, May 26, 1971, cited in FBIS, May 28, 1971, p.T4.

Policy toward Yugoslavia, the People's Republic of China (PRC) and North Korea

The policy toward Yugoslavia did not differ significantly from the policy of former governments, except to become even more cordial. Yugoslavia was still perceived in Khartoum as a leader of third-world countries and was closer to the new government than to previous regimes because the RCC perceived it as not only a friendly developing country, but also as a fellow-socialist nation which had resolved centrifugal internal forces similar in a general way to those the new government was striving to overcome in the southern Sudan.

At the end of 1969 an agreement between the two countries was signed which was aimed at increasing trade to a value of \$4 million a year (up from about \$3 million in 1969), but despite the warm relations between the two countries, the Yugoslav share of Sudanese imports and exports remained very low.²³² In 1970 Tito visited the Sudan twice and there were visits to Belgrade by Sudanese officials as well. In June 1970 RCC Chairman Nimeiri went to Yugoslavia, saying before his departure that it offered a model for the Sudan, as it had achieved unity despite internal differences in language and culture.²³³

The policy toward the PRC also started from a positive base established by previous governments and developed in substance during the 1969-1971 period. Although the Sudan had a recognized the PRC as

²³² Throughout 1969-1979, the Yugoslav share of Sudanese exports never exceeded 1.3 percent; of imports, 1.9 percent. See Appendix C for detailed information on Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

²³³ Arab Report and Record, June 1-16, 1970.

early as 1958, it was not until November 1969 that it was announced that a Sudanese Embassy was to be opened in Peking.²³⁴ Although the Sudanese side felt that the PRC represented an important potential market for Sudanese goods, and despite negotiations to increase existing bilateral trade, Sudanese-Chinese trade did not increase dramatically in the 1969-1971 period.²³⁵

The PRC government sent a message of support over the Aba Island confrontation and in May 1970 when the new Chinese Ambassador presented his credentials, Nimeiri said that Sino-Sudanese relations were "growing stronger every day" and mentioned that further trade talks were being held.²³⁶ In June 1970 the Chinese government agreed to provide an interest-free loan of \$34.8 million, to be repaid over sixteen years in agricultural products. In August 1970 Nimeiri and a large delegation visited Peking and signed agreements on economic/technical and cultural/scientific cooperation. In December 1970 and again in February 1971 Chinese delegations visited Khartoum to discuss projects, particularly the showpiece of Chinese aid, a large conference hall to be built in Khartoum. Further exchanges of delegations occurred in April, May and June 1971, at which time the PRC agreed to finance and construct the Wad Medani-Gedarif portion of the Khartoum-Port Sudan road, including a major bridge at Wad Medani.

²³⁴ Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1969.

²³⁵ The PRC had a 6.7 percent share of Sudanese exports in 1971, the high point of the period. The Chinese share of Sudanese exports rose to 9.4 percent in 1971, from a high of 7.9 percent in 1965. See Appendix C for detailed information on Sudanese trade, 1969-1971.

²³⁶ Arab Report and Record, May 1-196, 1970.

Sudanese officials felt that aid from the PRC was the best that they were given by any nation: the work was well and quickly done by unobtrusive crews of Chinese engineers and workers who lived spartan lives during their stay in the Sudan. There were never any strings attached to Chinese aid and they supplied military equipment without charge.²³⁷

The relations with North Korea which had existed in previous regimes at a very low level were raised almost immediately by the RCC to the embassy level and a warm friendship developed between the two governments between May 1969 and July 1971.²³⁸ Delegations were exchanged between the two countries in June and July 1970, and in April and May 1971.²³⁹ In August 1970 RCC Chairman Nimeiri visited North Korea and an agreement on economic, cultural and technical cooperation was signed.²⁴⁰

CONCLUSION

On July 19, 1971 the Sudanese government was overthrown. On the next day a new RCC was named, with Lt. Col. Babikir al Nur as its Chairman, and including Maj. Hashim al Atta, Maj. Farouk Osman Hamadallah (all three of whom had been dismissed from the RCC in November 1970), and four other officers. The head of the new

²³⁷ Interview with members of the RCC.

²³⁸ Relations were established at the embassy level on June 21, 1969. Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1969.

²³⁹ Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1970, July 1-15, 1970, April 16-30, 1971 and May 1-15, 1971.

²⁴⁰ Arab Report and Record, August 1-15 and 16-31, 1970.

government was in London at the time, along with Maj. Farouk Osman, but they boarded a flight for Khartoum on July 21. The BOAC jet on which they were passengers was forced down at Benghazi by Libyan authorities and the two officers were taken into custody. On July 22 forces loyal to the previous government carried out a counter-coup. The former RCC regained power and ordered the arrest of "every communist in the Sudan."²⁴¹ The two coup leaders who had been en route from London were returned to the Sudan under guard.

The killing of thirty-eight officers and non-commissioned officers during the three day coup added to the bitterness felt by Nimeiri and his colleagues on the RCC over their betrayal by their three former RCC colleagues, and by such long-time associates as Palace Guard Commander Col. Osman Hussein Abu Sheba and Col. Abd al Moneim Ahmad. Hasty trials of these and other officers followed and by July 26th they had been found guilty and executed. CPS Secretary-General Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub was tried and executed for involvement in the coup, as was Shafie Ahmad al Sheikh, head of the Sudanese Federation of Trade Unions. Minister of Southern Affairs Joseph Garang, a member of Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub's faction of the CPS, was stripped of his ministerial post on July 24, tried on July 27, and hanged the same day. The Minister of Information said that 1,000 people had been detained and might be prosecuted for complicity in the coup.²⁴²

²⁴¹ Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1971.

²⁴² Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1971.

The alliance between the inexperienced, "vaguely socialist" officers and the politically sophisticated CPS leadership, which had taken shape in the "May Revolution," had ended in the total suppression of the CPS and the death of its most prominent leaders. With the exception of the southern Sudan conflict, the effect of the July 1971 coup d'etat on the internal and external politics of the Sudan was greater than any event since independence.

CHAPTER THREE: SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY, JULY 1971 THROUGH JULY 1976

INTRODUCTION

The most obvious characteristic of this period of Sudanese foreign policy is that it is a period of transition between the collegial rule and radical, pro-Soviet foreign policy of the May 1969-July 1971 period on the one hand and the one-man rule and conservative, pro-American policy of the July 1976-July 1982 period on the other hand. Domestic policy in the early part of the 1971-1976 period was marked by attempts to create political institutions at the national level, to implement a program of local government, and to move away from the earlier efforts to widen the public sector. Foreign policy lost all ideological direction and was viewed as a means of furthering domestic objectives of economic development and national unity, concepts promoted by a group headed by the new Foreign Minister, Mansour Khalid, which supplanted the powerful members of the RCC, all but one of whom left the government between December 1971 and October 1972 after a new presidential system formally replaced the RCC in October 1971.

The change in direction of Sudanese foreign policy became quite clear in the first year after the July 1971 coup attempt. Public statements by the President and the Foreign Minister no longer referred to revolution and socialism. Foreign policy in this period

was no longer to be a projection of ideology but a tool of internal policy: "...foreign policy is not an end in itself but is one of the weapons of domestic policy."²⁴³

Foreign policy must be used actively in the service of national interests. This is why our foreign policy will play a more active role in serving progress, fighting backwardness, developing our homeland and rebuilding our lives.²⁴⁴

Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid stated the new direction in foreign policy most succinctly: "The aim of our foreign policy is to achieve national unity at home and provide the means of development."²⁴⁵ A key word of the 1969-1971 period was used in an entirely different context in 1971-1976: "...imperialism is not necessarily Western imperialism. Eastern imperialism has appeared in the last few years."²⁴⁶ Foreign policy had moved from an ideological basis to a pragmatic one; it was now to be designed to obtain the funds and assistance needed for economic development and the cooperation and resources to achieve and consolidate a solution to the southern conflict.

The pro-Western orientation of the new Foreign Minister and Nimeiri's personal reaction to the July 1971 coup attempt provided the personal elements of the initial turn to the West. The new emphasis on foreign policy as a tool of development and national unity gave a

²⁴³ Speech by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, March 3, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 6, 1972, pp. T1-6.

²⁴⁴ Address by President Nimeiri to Ambassadors' Conference, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Omdurman Domestic Service, January 11, 1972, cited in FBIS, January 12, 1972, pp. T9-10.

²⁴⁵ Speech at Armed Forces Club, Omdurman Domestic Service, November 1, 1972, cited in FBIS, November 1, 1972, p. T7.

²⁴⁶ Speech by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, May 25, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 26, 1972, pp. T6-10.

practical dimension to the rapprochement with the West and with the oil-producing Arab conservatives. Both groups could be expected to be sources of the funds for development and the rebuilding of the war-torn southern Sudan, and to respond favorably to the Sudan's initial recoil from the Soviet Union. A theoretical basis for the new orientation of policy was the attraction of the new Foreign Minister to the concept of good relations with both superpowers. After the initial coolness with the Soviet Union in late 1971, it was viewed once again as a potential source of assistance, although never again with the same trust and affection as the RCC had viewed it in 1969-1971. Diplomatic relations with the USSR were not broken over the July 1971 coup, although both countries withdrew their ambassadors. Diplomatic relations with the United States were resumed in July 1972 and in the fall of that year the Sudan began to "normalize" its relations with the USSR. Relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) had always been warm, but during this period they began to flourish. Thus in a little over a year after the July 1971 coup attempt, the Sudan managed to find a middle path between close alliance with either of the two superpowers and was in close cooperation with the PRC, the one great power which could supply high-quality, unconditional assistance, which was tainted with neither past imperialism nor recent intrigue against the Sudan, and which enjoyed the high regard of the third world.

The coup attempt of July 1971 and the new emphasis on economic development and national unity also had an important effect on the Sudan's position in the Arab world. Moving away from the radical Arab camp, the Sudan cultivated close relations with Saudi Arabia, the Gulf

states and some of the Arab conservatives, both for political and financial reasons. The conclusion of the Addis Ababa agreement in February 1972, ending seventeen years of civil war, gave the Sudan less room to maneuver in the complex arena of Arab politics as there was now a vocal and active segment of Sudanese politics which had strong, negative views on questions of Sudanese participation in schemes of Arab unity -- the southern Sudanese. The Sudan's move toward the Arab conservatives and the West, and the impact of the resolution of the southern problem, helped to create problems in Sudanese relations with both Egypt and Libya in the early part of the 1971-1976 period, but these were largely resolved in 1973 and 1974 and the Sudan settled into a middle position in the Arab world for the rest of this period.

THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The early part of the period between July 1971 and July 1976 saw major changes in both the institutions and personnel of decision-making. In October 1971 the results of the one-man presidential referendum were announced. RCC Chairman Nimeiri received 99.6 percent of the votes cast, and the Sudan formally abandoned the rule of a Revolutionary Command Council for a presidential system. The single political organization, the Sudanese Socialist Union (SSU), began preparations for a national congress to be held in early 1972 and in January 1972 the members of the highest body of that organization, the Political Bureau, were named. In August 1972 a Presidential decree established the People's Assembly, which debated and ratified a Permanent Constitution, issued in May 1973, completing the work of constitutional construction.

While the new system may have appeared to create a government in which there would be substantial centers of power outside the presidency, in fact the sweeping powers granted him in the Constitution and later amendments to it, the failure of the People's Assembly to become anything more than a forum for political debate, and the fact that the heart of the SSU -- the Political Bureau -- served more or less at the pleasure of the President, all guaranteed almost from the beginning that the new system of government would be little more than a facade of an authoritarian system.²⁴⁷

These major institutional changes were matched by changes in personnel. Within one year of his elevation to the Presidency, all but one of Nimeiri's former RCC colleagues were out of government, leftists and Arab nationalists had been purged from every level of government and the army, and the new President was surrounded by a

²⁴⁷ While the members of the Political Bureau, after the first one (which was appointed by the RCC as a group), was to be elected by the Central Committee, it is the prerogative of the President to nominate those from whom the Central Committee elects the members. Proponents of the system argue that the President's list of nominees has become steadily larger, thus giving the Central Committee increasingly greater power in selecting the Political Bureau. However, President has dismissed and appointed Political Bureau members at will, thus leaving the organization without any power independent of the President in practical terms. A number of persons who have been members of the Political Bureau off and on since its inception agree privately that the organization has no power independent of the President. Even more agree that it has no role in foreign policy. Of fourteen present and former Political Bureau members with whom its work was discussed during interviews for this research, only four (one of whom was President Nimeiri) claim a policy-making role for the organization. Five (two of whom are still members of the Political Bureau) vigorously deny that it has any policy-making role. One denies it a foreign policy role, but is noncommittal on domestic policy-making. The other four were noncommittal but implied that they didn't want to waste time talking about the SSU. The People's Assembly appears to be a somewhat different case. While it is sometimes the scene of vigorous debate and its members appear to take its work seriously, even its staunchest advocates

different group of politicians who, by virtue of their influence on him, were members of the new decision-making group. The degree to which these individuals formed a cohesive group is questionable, but each played a powerful role at least in his own field and the four major members of the group had broad influence over the gamut of domestic politics. While it is not possible to document the strength of their role in the same way that one can point to the role of the RCC members in the earlier period, there is consensus among the persons interviewed for this research that Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid (in particular), plus the Ministers of Local Government (Jaafar Mohamed Ali Bakheit), Information (Brig. Omer al Haj Mousa), and Finance (Ibrahim Moneim Mansour) were members of an inner, decision-making circle along with President Nimeiri.

In view of these important changes in institutions and personnel, it is not surprising that the decision-making process was altered significantly. The collegial decision-making of a small group of equals with the advice of selected ministers was replaced by a process of consultation between another small group of ministers who exercised substantial power with the President's consent, and the President himself, in whom was vested both vast political power and sweeping legal authority.

Foreign policy in particular was dominated by the figures of President Nimeiri and Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, who was widely viewed as the chief among the informal group of decision-makers and

are unable to cite compelling examples where it successfully challenged the President on a major issue. No one believes it has any role in foreign policy.

the insider with the greatest influence on the President. While important matters of foreign policy were usually taken before the foreign affairs committee of the SSU, in the words of Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, "they never did anything;" neither did the Foreign Affairs Committee of the People's Assembly.²⁴⁸ Both bodies were supposed to have had their own staffs and views, but neither one did the background work necessary to form independent opinions, and given the dependence of their members upon the goodwill of the President to stay in office, they invariably agreed with whatever course of action the President and Foreign Minister agreed upon.²⁴⁹ As for the relationship between the two dominant figures of foreign policy, Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid states

in no case did the President make a major decision unilaterally, even in the appointment of ambassadors -- there was always a process of consultation

with the Foreign Minister.²⁵⁰ This is confirmed by close observers of the foreign policy process within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²⁵¹

In January 1975 a cabinet reshuffle moved Mansour Khalid to the Ministry of Education and displaced other members of the inner circle as well. The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Jemal Mohamed Ahmad, functioned as Foreign Minister during this period and was appointed Minister in May 1975.²⁵² Although Jemal Mohamed Ahmad was a

²⁴⁸ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

²⁴⁹ Mansour Khalid suggests that it was primarily their lack of staff work that rendered them powerless in foreign policy-making. Interview with Mansour Khalid.

²⁵⁰ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

²⁵¹ Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

²⁵² Interview with Jemal Mohamed Ahmad.

respected diplomat and intellectual, he did not enjoy the insider status of Mansour Khalid; nor did Mahgoub Makkawi, another career diplomat who succeeded Jamal Mohamed Ahmad as Foreign Minister in February 1976.

Mansour Khalid, a Western-educated lawyer of a middle class family, had served previously as Minister of Youth and Sports and as Permanent Representative to the United Nations. He played a substantial role in the negotiations that led to the March 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement ending the Sudanese civil war and had, like President Nimeiri himself, a strong personal stake in the success of the newly-established national unity. The new foreign Minister was the driving force behind the new orientation of foreign policy as a tool of what he perceived to be the two major internal issues facing the Sudan, economic development and the achievement and consolidation of national unity: "this was a deliberate policy."²⁵³ He felt that it was essential to promote good relations with neighboring states to promote national unity and security, and to maintain good relations with the Arab states and the industrial world to obtain development aid.²⁵⁴

The new Foreign Minister was perceived -- both within and outside the Sudan -- as fundamentally pro-Western, favoring stronger relations with Africa, disinclined to promote Arab unity, and at least ambivalent -- if not actually hostile -- to the "special relationship"

²⁵³ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Mansour Khalid admits that he did not favor the "special relationship" to the extent that it had existed between May 1969 and July 1971, and that the Abboud regime had been the only

of the Sudan with Egypt.²⁵⁵ He felt that while Sudanese policy toward Egypt had to recognize the special nature of the relationship, this must not be allowed to affect the Sudan's relations with other countries. The relationship with Egypt he wanted to "divorce" from Egypt's relations with the rest of the Arab world.²⁵⁶ He was not especially interested in Libya: "Libya would have been marginal except for the fact that it was getting richer and for Qadafi's aggressive policies."²⁵⁷

The Foreign Minister did not have the emotional reaction to the coup and counter-coup of July 1971 that Nimeiri and his RCC colleagues did since it did not affect him nearly as directly. He remarked ten years later that he was not surprised that the Soviet Union would support the CPS and that fact should not alter the reality that the USSR existed and had to be dealt with.²⁵⁸ He favored good relations with both superpowers and, for this reason, initiated the meetings at the United Nations with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko which resulted in the exchange of ambassadors, and favored early resumption of relations with the United States. Just as he perceived the West as a potential source of development aid, he felt it was good to have "a balanced policy. We needed the Soviet Union as a developed country

government willing to "tell the Egyptians to go to hell" when necessary. He was, however, still Foreign Minister when the 1974 integration agreement was signed with Egypt: he seemed to feel that after the 1972 "misunderstandings" between the Sudan and Egypt, the relationship was on a different footing. He was certainly viewed in Egypt as being -- at least in the beginning -- anti-Egyptian and extremely pro-Western.

²⁵⁶ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

with resources."²⁵⁹ He viewed the nations of Eastern Europe as part of the Soviet bloc, with the exception of Romania. He saw Western Europe, however, as a "force of its own" and was keen to develop good relations with Western European nations in the interests of economic development.²⁶⁰

The events of July 1971 and their aftermath appear to have had a strong effect on the political character of the new President. He had refused to believe warnings about the impending coup in July 1971, trusting the loyalty of the officers who had been specifically mentioned as conspirators. His capture and imprisonment in the Palace during the coup was apparently a traumatic experience:

I was arrested in my bedroom at the Presidential Palace. A number of weapons were held at my throat and I was made to hold my hands above my head for more than an hour. Then I was marched out in my night-clothes and barefoot. I was starved for nineteen hours and had only two mouthfuls of water while under detention.²⁶¹

After the counter-coup, Nimeiri's reaction was one of violent betrayal, and close friends and associates believe that he had undergone some kind of personality change.²⁶² The humiliation of the three day coup may have given him a greater appreciation of power than the twenty-six preceding months of shared control with his RCC colleagues. Whatever the precise effect of the coup on Nimeiri's character, it is only after 1971 that there emerges the master tactician of internal politics who has until now survived countless

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1971.

²⁶² This is the view of several of his close associates of many years standing.

domestic intrigues and played off against one another a host of powerful political personalities.

Nimeiri's sense of betrayal by the USSR, vehement in the early months, became muted after the first year, but never wholly disappeared, even after normal relations were restored with the Soviet Union at the beginning of 1973. His rapprochement with the US, which grew throughout the 1971-1976 period, was certainly influenced by his disenchantment with the USSR, but he had never been vehemently anti-American in any case and harbored a reservoir of good feeling about the country in which he had obtained advanced military training in the 1960's.²⁶³ However, during the 1971-1976 period he never exhibited the unalloyed enthusiasm for the United States which was to be characteristic of the post-1976 phase because the need to turn to Egypt and the United States to help maintain an increasingly shaky regime did not become compelling until after 1976.

Just as he had never been the most anti-American or pro-Soviet of the RCC in 1969-1971, he had also not been counted among the most devoutly Arab nationalist of his colleagues. His purge of pro-Egyptian and Arab nationalist figures in 1971-1972, and his willingness to allow relations with Egypt to reach a new low in 1972 were perhaps indicative of his lack of personal commitment to this point of view, as well as a reaction to Egyptian high-handedness and personal criticism in the Egyptian press. He has been described by one of his foreign ministers as more of a Sudanese nationalist than an

²⁶³ Nimeiri's lack of dislike for the United States on a personal level was noticed by other RCC members and associates of the RCC even during the 1969-1971 period.

Arab nationalist.²⁶⁴ This was certainly a more apt description of his attitude to the Arab world during the years following 1971, once his peers on the RCC were out of power. Judging by his references to it in the years since then and according to close associates, the resolution of the southern conflict meant a great deal to him personally and appeared to have had the effect not only of tempering his enthusiasm for high-profile schemes of Arab political unity, but also of enhancing his perception of himself and the Sudan as mediating factors in Arab and African politics. He referred repeatedly in speeches and to those around him to the notion that he could apply to other civil wars the lessons learned from the resolution of the southern conflict. The success of the negotiations leading to the Addis Ababa accord also appeared to focus his attention inward, to the concepts of national unity and development proposed by Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid as the guiding precepts of the Sudan's foreign policy.

Jaafar Mohamed Nimeiri is regarded by many who have worked closely with him both as impulsive and as a tactician rather than a strategist by nature.²⁶⁵ That the foreign policy of the 1971-1976 period is not more marked by these characteristics is probably due to the strong influence over the President exercised by Mansour Khalid, who is universally regarded as both cool-headed and calculating. Only after 1976 did the foreign policy of the Sudan begin to bear the distinctive

²⁶⁴ Interview with Jemal Mohamed Ahmad.

²⁶⁵ This was expressed by a number of persons who had worked with him in the government, including politicians of such different perspectives as former Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid and current Attorney-General (and Muslim Brotherhood leader) Hassan al Turabi.

marks of the character of the President himself, after most of the powerful political personalities were no longer in the arena.

DOMESTIC POLITICS, JULY 1971-JULY 1976

In addition to a plan to strengthen local government and de-nationalization to promote foreign investment in the Sudan, there were three major dimensions to domestic politics in the 1971-1976 period: institutionalization, mobilization of popular support, and consolidation of power.

While the RCC had been planning some kind of institutionalization before the July 1971 coup attempt, these events hastened the implementation of the new system.²⁶⁶ Although there was disagreement initially among the RCC members on the dissolution of the council, there was genuine sentiment among them favoring new institutional means of popular participation in government. Certainly the fact that the short-lived coup occurred at all pointed out the need for some new form of regime legitimacy. Within several weeks after the events of late July 1971, the RCC had decided on a presidential referendum. There is some disagreement among RCC members as to how the decision to disband the RCC and hold the referendum were made, but certain points are clear. Not all of the RCC favored disbanding it, but when the notion was raised, and adamantly pressed by RCC member and Minister of Defense Gen. Khalid Hassan Abbas a short time after the July coup attempt, even the dissenting members of the RCC were somehow talked

²⁶⁶ The account of events in this paragraph is based on interviews with several close observers in the cabinet and members of the RCC, including Babikir Awadallah.

into agreeing. The discussion moved quickly from whether to disband the RCC and hold the referendum to how to accomplish this. There was little awareness on the part of the members of the RCC that this would be the major turning point in domestic politics in the post-1969 period. RCC Chairman Nimeiri at first dissented, but ultimately concurred in the decision.

Nimeiri was nominated for the Presidency by the RCC and in October 1971 the results of the one-man referendum were announced: Nimeiri received approximately 98.6 percent of about four million votes cast.²⁶⁷ On October 11, 1971 he was formally installed as President and the RCC was disbanded. On August 13, 1971 a temporary constitution had been decreed by the RCC. It provided for the creation of a popular assembly which would draft a permanent constitution to be considered by a national congress of the new political organization, the SSU. The SSU Congress assembled in the beginning of January 1972 and quickly approved a draft national charter and a draft permanent constitution submitted by President Nimeiri. On August 6, 1972 a presidential decree provided for national elections for a People's Assembly of 207 members, with thirty-two appointed by the President, cabinet ministers as ex officio members, and the rest to be elected by popular vote between September 22 and October 4, 1972. The new People's Assembly was to undertake immediate consideration of the new constitution. It opened in October 1972 and in April 1973 ratified the new constitution, a lengthy document distinguished by the broad powers granted in it to the President of the Republic. The powers of the President were increased

²⁶⁷ Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1971.

in amendments enacted in 1973 and 1975.

The principle means by which the RCC had intended to mobilize popular support was the single political organization, the SSU. Plans for its formation had been announced in May 1971, even before the July 1971 coup and counter-coup. The organization was not an unusual phenomenon for a third world nation and it clearly followed the Egyptian model of Nasser's third attempt at party building, the Arab Socialist Union, itself a third world version of communist party structures. The need for a political organization had been perceived well before the July coup and, given the RCC's determination not to allow a revival of the traditional parties, and the usual arguments about a multi-party system exacerbating tribal and other social divisions, a single-party system was perceived to be the solution.

While some of the planners of the new organization were undoubtedly sincere in their attempt to create a vehicle of popular political participation, in retrospect there is very little to suggest that the SSU could have become a center of power independent of the Presidency. The only hopeful element may have been the irrepressible political character of the Sudanese people, but that did not prevail against what can only be interpreted as Presidential unwillingness to diminish his own power to make of the SSU a genuine political organization. As with Egypt's Arab Socialist Union, the SSU was soon perceived by the Sudanese people as having little more meaning than a potential vehicle of control from the top; as former RCC member and SSU Deputy Secretary-General for Organization and Administration Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim told a Khartoum meeting in 1973, the SSU had been

given the task of bringing "counter-revolutionary" elements to justice.²⁶⁸

The RCC selected the first Political Bureau. After the dissolution of the RCC the President provided a list of nominees to the Central Committee from which they were to select the members of the Political Bureau. Individual Political Bureau members appear to have been dismissed and appointed at the pleasure of the President. In October 1972 the President appointed 260 people to the first Central Committee. By that time, all but one of the former RCC members, who were supposed to have been ex officio members of the Political Bureau, were out of government, and the Political Bureau had become what it was destined to remain, "political discussion group" without power.²⁶⁹

The appearance of popular participation created by the institutions established between 1971 and 1973 was illusory. Very few Sudanese politicians of the post-1969 period, whether presently in government

²⁶⁸ Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1973.

²⁶⁹ The term "nothing but a political discussion group" is that of former Foreign Minister and Political Bureau member Mansour Khalid, but one present and several former members found it very apt. It has been suggested by a 1971-72 cabinet minister who was close to members of the RCC, that the main reason the RCC members were persuaded to disband their base of authority, the RCC, was that they were all to have been permanent ex officio members of the Political Bureau. As such, their independent political power base might have been maintained and the SSU itself might have had power independent of the President. But by the end of 1972 all but one of the former RCC members were out of the government on less than friendly terms with the President. Apparently at the 1974 National Congress of the SSU, a proposal was made to "democratize" the Political Bureau by eliminating provisions for any ex officio Political Bureau members. Such an amendment, according to the Basic Rules of the SSU, could be approved only after agreement by a 2/3 majority of the Congress. Instead it was agreed to by acclaim, and a point of order raised by former Minister of Rural Cooperatives and Political Bureau member Osman Abu al Gasim Hashim was speedily denied.

or outside, argue that the People's Assembly or the SSU played -- or ever will play -- a major role in formulating, ratifying or implementing policy in the Sudan. Even those few who claim a role for either organization do not believe that they played a role in foreign policy.

The third dimension of domestic politics -- consolidation of power -- was certainly no more a declared policy than in the previous period. Most measures of power consolidation were reactive and followed coup attempts or incidents of domestic unrest. Some were apparently part of a more long-term perspective, such as systematic and numerous visits to military units by the President. Power consolidation appears to have consisted of two types of interrelated activities: those aimed at the preservation of the regime as a whole, and those aimed at the enhancement and maintenance of power of the President within the regime. In addition to contacts with the army and individual arrests, measures to enhance the power of the regime and eliminate both actual and potential sources of opposition included: full takeover of the press, purging and reorganizing the trade union movement under government control, temporary closures of the University of Khartoum, and new laws and amendments to the Constitution designed to increase both security and presidential prerogatives under the law.

As early as September 1971 the RCC announced that the press, nationalized in August 1970, would be placed under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Information and Culture. On October 26, 1971 a decree provided for the SSU to assume ownership of the press in order to

place it under popular supervision and effect the consolidation of the concepts of the Revolution.²⁷⁰

More significant, the Sudanese trade union movement, already vitiated by the execution of the president of the trade union federation following his alleged involvement in the July 1971 coup, was purged and "reorganized." On August 2, 1971 RCC Chairman Nimeiri announced that the trade union movement was to be "sponsored, consolidated, guided and controlled by the State" and that the several hundred existing unions were to be reduced to thirty.²⁷¹ Not only the trade unions, but all political organizations -- including women's and youth organizations -- were to fall within the SSU organization. Opposition from within the trade union movement was firmly put down. Upon learning that railroad workers were advocating independent unions, President Nimeiri said in Atbara (headquarters of the railroad and always in the vanguard of Sudanese leftism):

Anyone who... advocates the idea that there are various organizations for the workers or the farmers which would like to operate outside the framework of the SSU is a big traitor who should be tried in accordance with the Constitution for committing high treason.²⁷²

Another tactic for dealing with internal opposition was temporary closure of the University of Khartoum, which was closed following the August 1973 riots and again in September 1975 following the September 5 coup attempt. In August 1973 the University was occupied by troops when student demonstrations moved down the street from the University

²⁷⁰ Arab Report and Record, October 16-31, 1971.

²⁷¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 2, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 3, 1971, p. T4.

²⁷² Omdurman Domestic Service, July 12, 1973, cited in FBIS, July 13, 1973, pp. T6-7.

itself.²⁷³

In June 1973 and September 1975 laws and constitutional amendments enhancing security and presidential authority were enacted. The State Security law of June 1973 was provided for punishment by death or life imprisonment for inciting or helping in the commission of acts intended to undermine the Constitution, destroy the "May Revolution," or prejudice the independence, unity or territorial integrity of the Sudan.²⁷⁴ It also banned possession of arms for political purposes and forbade strikes or resignations harming the national economy, and banned all political organizations except for the SSU and any other organizations proposed by the state.

In the wake of the September 1975 coup attempt the Central Committee of the SSU, the National Assembly and the Southern Region High Executive Council met in joint session. They supported the President's decision to close the University, recommended purging the civil service of "weak and hostile elements" and urged legislation to

enable the President to exercise his response to protect the Constitution... to deter traitors and protect the people and their Revolution.²⁷⁵

²⁷³ Troops were massed up the street from the University and moved into the University itself when the demonstrations moved up the street at the suggestion of government agents among the students. The University did not reopen for several months. Interview with a former intelligence official.

²⁷⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 29, 1973, cited in FBIS, June 29, 1973, p. T4.

²⁷⁵ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, September 12, 1975, cited in FBIS, September 16, 1975, pp. 12-4.

Within two months legislation was enacted which enhanced the power of the President to declare and operate within a state of emergency.²⁷⁶

The period from July 1971 to July 1976 included two major coup attempts (July 1971 and September 1975), but other plots were revealed by the government during the period, and like the unrest of July/August 1973, were followed by arrests. The two major coup attempts were followed both by arrests on a large scale and executions.

The pattern of events during the 1971-1976 period which served to create and enhance the role of Jaafar Mohamed Nimeiri as the sole power and authority in the Sudanese political system is clear in its impact. All but one of the officers of the RCC, plus former Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah, were dismissed or left the government under less than amicable circumstances within one year of Nimeiri's elevation to the Presidency. Powerful political roles were played by another small group of politicians who were themselves shifted out of government or to less potent positions in 1975. The former RCC members who had been removed were slowly brought back into government at about that same time, under conditions of vastly diminished power. From both groups one person -- in each case a strong political personality (former RCC member Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim and former Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid) -- was left in government, but in a

²⁷⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, November 11, 1975, cited in FBIS, November 13, 1975, p. 12.

²⁷⁷ Mansour Khalid was made Minister of Education in January 1975 and then Presidential Coordinator for Foreign Affairs. Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim after the dissolution of the RCC, held a number of different cabinet and SSU positions, such as Minister of Health,

more or less peripheral position.²⁷⁷ At later dates, during the 1976-1982 period, both of these men were brought back into positions of prominence, and then dismissed. A foreshadowing of the power politics of 1976-1982 which occurred toward the end of the 1971-1976 period was the beginning of political prominence of such individuals as Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Bahauddin Mohamed Idris, and Minister of Industry Badreddin Suleiman.

The removal of the former RCC members in 1972 was most significant. After the execution of the three former RCC members who had been involved in the 1971 coup attempt, there remained only five men who were Nimeiri's peers in both power and authority -- the five surviving officers of the RCC -- and one man who did not possess their military clout but whose political prominence and place on the RCC had made him Nimeiri's peer in authority -- former Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah. Almost immediately after the success of the July 1971 counter-coup, former Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah and Defense Minister Khalid Hassan Abbas were named Vice Presidents. At least two of the surviving officers of the RCC were generally regarded as very powerful political personalities: Minister of Health Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim and Vice President Khalid Hassan Abbas. Of these two the former -- who had been very close to Nimeiri and very loyal -- was kept in office continuously for another eight years, culminating in his last two years in office as Vice President (1977-1979). The other, Minister of Defense and Vice President Khalid Hassan Abbas, resigned all his posts in February 1972 following a personal dispute

Minister of Agriculture, and Assistant SSU Secretary General, but did not hold a very central position until 1977.

with President Nimeiri. His resignation was followed shortly by that of his cousin, former RCC member and former Minister of Interior Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid, who had been appointed Secretary-General of the new SSU. There are some mysteries surrounding the departure of Khalid Hassan Abbas from government but the "air of crisis in Khartoum" cited in the Egyptian press was probably not exaggerated.²⁷⁸ Almost certainly an opportunity existed for him to have made some move, but he did not do so.

Former Prime Minister Babikir Awadallah left the government in May 1972 and went to live in Cairo. Former RCC members Planning Minister Abu al Gasim Hashim and Transport Minister Zein al Abdin M. A. Abd al Gadir were dropped from the cabinet in the reshuffle of October 1972 without being notified beforehand by their former RCC colleague who had now become President. The new clique, headed by Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, was already in place, having been in government since well before 1971.²⁷⁹ Some observers, including some of the dismissed RCC members, believed that Mansour Khalid and his group had been the main force behind their removal from government.²⁸⁰ Certainly there

²⁷⁸ Arab Report and Record, February 1-14, 1972. Of course from the Egyptian point of view the resignations of Khalid Hassan Abbas and Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid meant the loss of two of the Arab nationalists from the highest levels of the Sudanese government and may have helped precipitate the tensions between Egypt and the Sudan in 1972.

²⁷⁹ Mansour Khalid had been appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs immediately after the July coup and in October 1971 both Jaafar M. A. Bakheit and Ibrahim Moneim Mansour joined the cabinet. Omer al Haj Moussa had been Minister of defense from June through October 1969, at which time he had move to the Ministry of National Guidance (later called the Ministry of Information and Culture).

²⁸⁰ Interview with members of the RCC and other political figures close to members of the RCC.

was antipathy between the new Foreign Minister and some former RCC members.

The cabinet change of January 1975 in which the Minister of Finance was dismissed and other members of the clique were moved to less prominent positions took place in a highly charged atmosphere (though certainly less so than that surrounding the removal of the first of the former RCC members in 1972) in which President Nimeiri accused "certain ministers" of empire building and opposition to him:

I was watching attempts by certain ministers to establish isolated empires that claimed sovereignty over other ministries. I was watching some people claim that they were centers of power, the sources of power and the supreme authority in the country... I refused to allow attempts to issue decisions contrary to the decision of the President of the Republic...²⁸¹

Mansour Khalid's own interpretation of this reshuffle was that President Nimeiri finally realized that the creation of political institutions that had some power meant necessarily a reduction of his own power.²⁸² The attempt, therefore, by Finance Minister Ibrahim Moneim Mansour to run the financial affairs of the Sudan was in conflict with the President's own desire to interfere with decisions made at any level of government. The ostensible cause of the Finance Minister's downfall was an alleged conflict of interest.²⁸³

²⁸¹ Speech by President Nimeiri to the new Council of Ministers, Omdurman Domestic Service, January 28, 1975, cited in FBIS, January 30, 1975, p. 15.

²⁸² Interview with Mansour Khalid.

²⁸³ Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1975. Ibrahim Moneim Mansour was brought back as Finance Minister after the major economic shake-up of November/December 1981.

At the same time a new post of Secretary-General of the President's office was created

to eliminate ambiguity, intermingling and lack of definition of powers ... to coordinate the work of the various ministries."²⁸⁴

In this same reshuffle one of the former RCC members was brought back into the cabinet, and by the beginning of 1976 all four former RCC members who had left the government had been appointed to posts in the cabinet or the upper echelons of the SSU. Having left positions of far greater power in 1972, they were by now presumably chastened sufficiently to accept their clearly subordinate status.

If these changes and the timing of them occurred fortuitously, it was a series of useful coincidences for the personal power of President Nimeiri. While it is unlikely that they were part of a clever, long-term strategy of personal power by the President, the most logical explanation is that he learned from experience over the months how to selectively appoint and dismiss, to coopt strong personalities to be 'kept on the back burner' until needed to balance other elements, and to balance groups and individuals off against one another rather than allowing any of them the opportunity to oppose him.

²⁸⁴ Speech by President Nimeiri to the new Council of Ministers.

FOREIGN POLICY, JULY 1971-JULY 1976Policy toward the USSR, the US and Europe

Because of the clearly pro-Soviet, anti-American policy of 1969-1971 and the generally pro-Western orientation of the decision-makers of the post-1971 period, the rapprochement with the United States and such nations as West Germany appeared more dramatic than it was. What occurred was a clear move by the Sudan out of the Soviet, but not yet into the American, orbit. The alignment of the Sudan in the 1971-1976 period could best be described as balanced between the two superpowers, leaning toward the United States. The Sudan did not become an American "ally" (figuratively) until after 1976, and its policy between the two superpowers in 1971-1976 is in sharp contrast to the distinctively pro-Soviet policy of 1969-1971 and pro-American policy of the post-1978 period.

Although a balanced policy between the two superpowers took almost two years to achieve, it was in the mind of the Foreign Minister from the beginning of the period. He favored maintaining diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union for the same reason that he supported resuming diplomatic relations with the United States: the superpowers are a "reality" with which the Sudan must deal and it is better for practical reasons to have diplomatic relations with both.²⁸⁵

The evidence suggests that the desire for balanced relations was sincere. The Sudan did not break diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in July 1971 and was slow to blame them for foreknowledge of the coup, although the evidence later cited for allegations of Soviet

²⁸⁵ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

involvement was known at the time of the coup itself.²⁸⁶ When the Sudanese government did withdraw its ambassador from Moscow and expel Soviet and Bulgarian diplomats, it was only after press attacks by the Soviets and its Eastern European allies on the Sudan for the execution of leading Sudanese communists. The Sudan also moved slowly to re-establish relations with the United States, first renewing ties with West Germany, an American ally which had been tarred with the same brush in 1969-1971. The restoration of relations with the US was followed in only a few months by rapprochement with the Soviet Union.

The conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord in 1972, ending the seventeen year civil war in the Sudan, also played a role in the Sudan's policy toward the superpowers, as the dependence upon the Soviet Union for weapons to deploy in the south was ended and American aid for the relief and resettlement of the southern Sudanese was the trigger for Nimeiri's desire to resume diplomatic relations. During the period leading up to the conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord, the West clearly had more influence on the southerners than the Soviet Union did.

The important relationship with Egypt may also have played a role in the Sudan's superpower policy in 1971-1976, but its impact is both complex and unclear. Certainly Egyptian press criticism of Nimeiri's indication that he was considering renewing diplomatic relations with

²⁸⁶ President Nimeiri and some RCC members believe that the USSR knew of the coup because of their delays in granting a visa to then Minister of Defense and RCC member Khalid Hassan Abbas. Le Monde, Paris, February 24, 1972, cited in FBIS, February 25, 1972, p. T10.

²⁸⁷ Arab Report and Record, May 16-31, 1973.

the US pushed him closer to doing it, by his own admission.²⁸⁷ Also, although domestic factors were primary in the Sudan's recoil from the Soviets in 1971 and its growing relationship with the United States, Egypt's move away from the USSR beginning in 1972 and its subsequent efforts to achieve better relations with the US, coupled with Egyptian-Sudanese closeness after 1972, may have made the Sudan's position between the superpowers easier.²⁸⁸

The changes in decision-making personnel after July 1971 certainly had a major impact on policy toward the Soviet Union and the United States. Removal of communists and leftists from government and the army, the elimination of RCC members, most of whom had been more anti-American than Nimeiri, and their effective replacement by an all-powerful President who was guided in foreign policy by a pro-Western Foreign Minister, all played a role in the Sudan's new alignment. It cannot be known whether Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid was brought into office particularly because of his pro-Western orientation or once in office he helped bring about the move away from the Soviet Union. The logic of the situation is that Nimeiri and the RCC, reacting to the leftist coup attempt, were ready to see more Western-oriented persons in policy-making positions, but at the same time, once in office, Mansour Khalid was instrumental in achieving for the Sudan a position between the superpowers, leaning toward the West, which was consistent with his own inclinations.

²⁸⁸ Whether there is some connection between the dates of Sadat's expulsion of Soviet advisors (July 18, 1972) and the Sudan's decision to resume relations with the United States (July 19, 1972) is unknown, but the timing suggests that Nimeiri, who already wanted to make this move, might have been encouraged by Sadat's step the day before.

The immediate impact of the July 1971 coup and counter-coup on policy toward the Soviet Union was ambiguous. Although relations with Iraq were broken almost immediately because of its alleged involvement in the coup, the Sudan was slow to move against the Soviets. At a July 29, 1971 meeting with foreign journalists, RCC Chairman Nimeiri said that there was nothing so far to prove Soviet intervention in the coup, although he criticized the way the news of the event was treated in several socialist countries.²⁸⁹ He affirmed that he did not want the Sudan's relations with friendly states, particularly the Soviet Union, to deteriorate. But criticism by the Soviet news agency, Tass, of the Sudan's execution of prominent communists allegedly involved in the coup resulted in a statement by Nimeiri that the Sudan had given the USSR forty-eight hours to end its attacks on the regime, otherwise he would "take all necessary steps to restore the dignity and prestige of the Sudan."²⁹⁰

I think they {the Soviets} ... were the accomplices of the Sudanese communists -- otherwise why all these attacks on us... It is interesting to note that none of the diplomatic corps in Khartoum called on Colonel Atta except for the Soviet Ambassador.²⁹¹

He made a clear connection with relations with the US, saying that the Sudan was now looking for improved relations with the West. Also on August 1, 1971 it was announced on Omdurman Radio,

As a result of the biased campaign launched in the information media of the Soviet Union and certain other socialist states, a campaign considered by our government to be unfriendly and unjustified interference in internal

²⁸⁹ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, July 29, 1971, cited in FBIS, p. T14.

²⁹⁰ Interview of Nimeiri by Colin Legum, London Observer, August 1, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 2, 1971, p. T4.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

affairs, ... the Revolutionary Command Council decided this evening to withdraw Sudan's ambassador to the Soviet Union and Bulgaria.²⁹²

Two days later it was announced that the Bulgarian Ambassador and the counsellor of the Soviet Embassy had been expelled from the Sudan because they had been in contact with the leaders of the abortive coup.²⁹³

The policy line that was to be followed officially in the next few months was clarified in a statement by Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid on August 4, 1971, in which he said that the Sudan did not want to escalate the situation with the Soviet Union to the maximum nor did it want the situation to go beyond the present point.²⁹⁴ He indicated that the Soviet press campaign had become less violent. As for the United States, he said that the Sudan's policy was firm and would not be changed as long as the US continued to support Israel against the Arab states. Relations had been broken in 1967 for good reasons, he said, and they would remain broken as long as Washington supported Israel, but the Sudan had economic and cultural relations with the US which could be developed.²⁹⁵

²⁹² Omdurman Domestic Service, August 1, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 2, 1971, p. T14.

²⁹³ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, August 3, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 4, 1971, p. T3.

²⁹⁴ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, August 4, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 5, 1971, pp. T6-7. A similar statement is found in an interview with the Foreign Minister reported by Agence France Presse, August 11, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 12, 1971, pp. T5-6.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

Underneath this official line, however, there was a change in the offering. This was pointed out clearly in the fact that, during his trial for involvement in the southern Sudan conflict, German-born mercenary Rolf Steiner made statements bearing on the role of the US Central Intelligence Agency in the conflict -- to which the Sudanese government made no public response.²⁹⁶ Having alleged participation by the CIA for the last two and a half years without offering definitive proof of their charges, the reluctance of the Sudanese government to make much of these allegations by Steiner pointed very clearly to a new attitude toward the US.

Mixed signals on policy toward the US and the USSR continued through 1971. While the Minister of State for Economy said in early August 1971 that imports from the Soviet Union had been banned, a few days later the Sudanese Chief of Staff said that the activities of the Soviet military experts, which had stagnated temporarily because of the "recent circumstances" were now continuing and that some of them had returned to their places of work in the Sudanese armed forces.²⁹⁷ By the end of 1971 the Sudan had renewed relations with both West Germany and Romania, but had refused to renew relations with the United States:

we will not restore diplomatic relations at present because the reason for their severance still exists -- the Israeli aggression...and your support for it... but we do not object to the continuation of economic and cultural relations.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1971.

²⁹⁷ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, August 7, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 10, 1971, p. T5. Omdurman Domestic Service, August 15, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 15, 1971, p. T3.

²⁹⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, December 17, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 20, 1971, pp. T4-7.

The Foreign Minister, however, had reportedly agreed in October to increase the size of the Washington Embassy to its pre-1967 size and the US had granted the Sudan a three year loan to buy American wheat and other goods to a value of \$18 million.²⁹⁹

Throughout the first half of 1972 an ambivalent policy was maintained. There was no obvious change in policy toward the United States; policy toward the Soviet Union remained wary. The few outright attacks on the Soviet Union were made by President Nimeiri. Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid continued a line of reasoning that relations with the USSR were "tense and difficult" but that the Sudan still hoped they would improve.³⁰⁰ The President generally took a harder line:

The Sudan's relations with the Soviet Union are very bad. The Soviets encourage the Sudanese Communist Party to fight the Revolution... If the Soviets refuse to supply us with spare parts in accordance with our needs, the Sudan will abandon the Soviet weapons and will buy our weapons from any other country.³⁰¹

Nimeiri's personal bitterness toward the Soviets was very clear. In a February 1972 interview with Eric Rouleau of Le Monde, Nimeiri said "with barely concealed anger" that the Soviet Union "stabbed us in the back" and cited as proof Moscow's refusal to grant the Minister of Defense a visa:

²⁹⁹ Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1971.

³⁰⁰ Statement by the Foreign Minister (during Scandinavian tour) Helsinki Domestic Service, December 21, 1971, in FBIS, December 22, 1971, pp. T4-5.

³⁰¹ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Ittihad, Abu Dhabi, cited by Agency France Presse, Paris, March 2, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 3, 1972, pp. T9-10.

It is obvious that they didn't wish to receive the representative of a regime which they believed would be overthrown very soon.³⁰²

Rouleau felt that both Nimeiri and Mansour Khalid were convinced that it would be necessary to normalize relations with the Soviets at some future time. But the time was not yet ripe, for in the same month Nimeiri reportedly refused to accept a new Soviet Ambassador.³⁰³

By May 1972 the Sudanese position toward the USSR had hardened and the move toward the West began to accelerate. On May 22 the Foreign Minister accused the Soviets of granting asylum to leaders of the CPS and permitting them to attack the Sudan.³⁰⁴ He said that the Sudan was willing to restore diplomatic relations if the USSR changed its attitude toward the Sudan. A far stronger indictment was made by President Nimeiri in his May 25, 1972 address: for the first time he called the Soviet Union and the Eastern European nations "the new imperialists" and referred to himself as an "arch-enemy of communism."³⁰⁵ He denied "deviating toward the West" but noted that trade deals with the West were called by some people "deviation" while exchanges with the Soviet Union were called progress.³⁰⁶ While the

³⁰² Le Monde, Paris, February 24, 1972, cited in FBIS, February 25, 1972, p. T10. Rouleau noted that other Sudanese leaders, including the Minister of Defense himself, were less certain of Soviet involvement or foreknowledge of the coup. In an interview for this research, however, former Minister of Defense Khalid Hassan Abbas indicated that he now believes firmly that the Soviets knew of the coup beforehand.

³⁰³ Al Moharrer, Beirut, March 6, 1972, cited in Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1972.

³⁰⁴ DPA, Cairo, May 22, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 23, 1972, p. T6.

³⁰⁵ Omdurman Domestic Service, May 25, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 26, 1972, pp. T6-10.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

official line on the US was still a refusal to renew relations until the US changed its Middle East policy, relations were clearly becoming warmer. Following the end of the US Export-Import Bank's ban on dealings with the Sudan, the Sudan in May 1972 applied for assistance in financing the purchase of \$3.5 million in equipment.³⁰⁷

The end of June and beginning of July 1972 were the turning point of relations with the United States. Minister of Culture and Information Omer al Haj Moussa made a three-week visit to the US in June and hinted broadly at the possibility of renewed diplomatic relations.³⁰⁸ On July 1, 1972 in a speech in Juba, President Nimeiri thanked the US for its gift of \$18 million to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees for relief and resettlement in the southern Sudan. He said it was the "biggest help coming from abroad" and had made him think seriously of reconsidering diplomatic relations with the United States.³⁰⁹

Despite public pronouncements on the necessity of a change in American policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Sudanese policy had been leaning toward this point for almost a year. It was, however, the American gift for southern rehabilitation that moved the President to the point of deciding to immediately re-establish diplomatic relations. Always impulsive, Nimeiri was deeply touched by this gift to further the greatest achievement of his regime and he wanted to

³⁰⁷ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, May 19, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 22, 1972, p. T5.

³⁰⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, July 2, 1972, cited in FBIS, July 3, 1972, pp. T6-7.

³⁰⁹ Arab Report and Record, 1-15, July, 1972.

restore ties with the US without delay.³¹⁰ On July 19 the decision was made to renew relations with the United States.³¹¹ Although Sadat himself had just the day before expelled Soviet military advisors, the reaction in Cairo and other parts of the Arab world was very critical.³¹²

The early part of the fall 1972 was occupied with the deterioration of relations between the Sudan and Egypt, so there was little movement in policy toward the superpowers until October, when SUNA reported that the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs had received the Soviet charge on October 7, 1972 to discuss Sudanese-Soviet relations, reportedly the first meeting of a high-level Sudanese official with a senior Soviet diplomat since the aftermath of the July 1971 coup and counter-coup.³¹³ At about this time meetings were going on at the UN in New York between the Foreign Ministers of the Sudan and the USSR, at the initiative of the Sudan. According to Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko was far from conciliatory:

He was aggressive, saying, 'You expelled our Ambassador... we don't want anything from Sudan, only an anti-imperialist policy.' I replied, 'Our policies have nothing to do with it... this is not an ideological question, and imperialism has many meanings today.' Gromyko was not happy with that, but we wanted to do it {restore normal relations} because it is good to have a balanced policy and we needed the Soviet Union as a developed country with resources.³¹⁴

³¹⁰ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

³¹¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, July 20, 1972, cited in FBIS, July 20, 1972, p. T4.

³¹² Cairo Domestic Service, July 21, 1972, cited in FBIS, July 21, 1972, p. G1.

³¹³ SUNA report in Ar Ra'y al Amm, Kuwait, October 8, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 12, 1972, p. T4.

³¹⁴ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

The criteria the Sudan had established for normalizing relations with the USSR were not very clear. In an October 1972 interview with Lebanese journalist Fu'ad Matar, Nimeiri was asked for a definitive statement on the criteria for normalization of relations with the Soviets.

Matar: Yesterday, Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid was telling me that the meeting he had with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko at the UN was fruitful and that in the light of that, ambassadors will be exchanged before the end of the year. A few weeks ago I met in Tripoli with Maj. Abu al Gasim {Mohamed} Ibrahim... He confirmed to me a stand which I had heard from Maj. Ma'mum 'Awad Abu Zeid when he was still in a position of power, namely, that the exchange of ambassadors will not take place until the Soviet Union denounces the 19 July movement. ... Do you still require the Soviet Union to denounce this movement as a condition for settling relations?

Nimeiri: What Mansour Khalid has said is true, what Abu al Gasim has said is true, and what Ma'mun has said is true... To say 'denounce' does not mean that the Soviet Union must issue a statement of denunciation. We do not demand that a Soviet official declare on some occasion that he denounces the July movement. The Soviet Union can show signs which can be understood as a denunciation. We shall accept this.

Matar: What kind of signs?

Nimeiri: We consider it an indirect denunciation if the Soviet Union sends aid to Sudan. We consider a kind of denunciation if the Soviet Union supports Sudan on foreign questions. Furthermore, we consider it some kind of denunciation if the Soviet Union does not give asylum to the former communist party {of the Sudan}...³¹⁵

On October 28, 1972 it was announced that the exchange of ambassadors between the two countries had been officially agreed upon and would occur soon.³¹⁶ By the early part of 1973 normal diplomatic relations existed with both superpowers and it appeared that Soviet aid --

³¹⁵ Interview with President Nimeiri, An Nahar, reported by Middle East News Agency, Damascus to Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 26, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 27, 1972, pp. T9-12.

³¹⁶ Arab Report and Record, 16-31, 1972.

suspended since July 1971 -- was beginning again, although not in the kind and volume of the 1969-1971 period.³¹⁷

Despite past statements, these policies appeared to be very clearly based on a desire to achieve balanced relations with the superpowers to maximize assistance from both sides, rather than any of the considerations which had been cited as preconditions for resumption of diplomatic relations with the US or "normal" relations with the USSR. Resumption of relations with the US, which was supposed to have been based on a change in its position on the Arab-Israeli conflict, was decided without any perceptible change in American policy toward Israel and the Arab states. The normalization of relations with the USSR, which was to have been predicated on Soviet initiative to "correct its mistakes" in its evaluation of the 1971 coup attempt, or to "change its attitude toward the Sudan," or to "denounce the July 1971 movement," took place without any known change in Soviet policy and notwithstanding Gromyko's surly reponse to the Sudanese initiative in New York.³¹⁸

³¹⁷ Talks were held in November 1972 between Soviet officials and Minister of State for Planning Lawrence Wolwol on means of re-establishing technical and economic cooperation. Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1972. On February 27, 1973 it was announced that the USSR had agreed to build a hospital in Khartoum under an agreement signed in 1961 and amended in 1965. Arab Report and Record, February 15-28, 1973.

³¹⁸ Statement by Minister of Defense and RCC member Khalid Hassan Abbas, Arab Report and Record, August 16-31, 1971. Statement by Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, DPA, Cairo, May 22, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 23, 1972, p. T4. Interview of Nimeiri by Fu'ad Matar, An Nahar. President Nimeiri also said, in an interview for this research in November 1981, that the Soviets had "apologised through the Czechs."

However far this example goes to illustrate the gap between rhetoric and reality in Sudanese foreign policy, or between prospective and retrospective reasons of state, the pattern of decisions succeeded in creating for the Sudan a new position between the superpowers and realized what was on the Foreign Minister's agenda since July 1971. The Sudan was now benefitting from economic aid from Western nations and financial institutions, increased assistance from the People's Republic of China and Romania, greater aid and investment from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, and yet was retaining a relationship with the Soviet Union which provided continued assistance, although at a lower level and without the sophisticated military aid program of the earlier period.³¹⁹ Sudanese policy toward the United States and the Soviet Union for the rest of the 1971-1976 period remained more or less at this level, although at the end of the period one can see the beginning of trends that would lead to deterioration in relations with the Soviets and increased intimacy with the Americans in the 1976-1982 period.

The Soviet Ambassador returned to Khartoum in January 1973 and before the end of the month it had been announced that the USSR planned to complete development projects previously suspended and to finance new ones.³²⁰ Committees were to be established to overcome obstructions to existing projects and to study further joint

³¹⁹ Interview with Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid by Eric Rouleau, Le Monde, Paris, February 16, 1972, cited in FBIS, February 25, 1972, pp. T8-13.

³²⁰ Al Ayyam, Khartoum, January 28, 1973, cited in FBIS, February 29, 1973, p. T4.

³²¹ Ibid.

development projects in the Sudan.³²¹ A Soviet military and economic delegation visited Khartoum in June 1973.³²² Relations continued in this way through the beginning of 1975, with Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid noting in January 1975 that the Sudan had good relations with the Soviet Union and was eager to deepen the relationship.³²³ He noted that the Sudanese government made a clear distinction between the Sudan's relations with the Soviet Union and Soviet relations with the communist parties of the world, a position far removed from Sudanese attacks on the Soviet Union in 1971 and 1972 for granting asylum to Sudanese communists.³²⁴

The conclusion of a defense agreement between Libya and the Soviet Union in May 1975 did not appear to be of immediate concern in Khartoum, probably because Sudanese relations with both Libya and the Soviet Union were good at this time, but it was to become a major element of Sudanese policy toward the Soviet Union when relations between the Sudan and Libya disintegrated after the July 1976 coup/invasion. By mid-1975, however, the Soviet Union had a presence also in Somalia, a matter which was of concern to the Sudan.³²⁵ In an August 1975 interview President Nimeiri said that the Sudan was opposed to giving the big powers naval or other facilities in Africa, the Red Sea area or the Indian Ocean.

³²² SUNA, cited by Omdurman Domestic Service, June 26, 1973, cited in FBIS, June 26, 1973, p. T8.

³²³ Agence France Presse, Paris, January 21, 1975, cited in FBIS, January 22, 1975, p. 14.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ There was never as much concern over the Soviet presence in Somalia, however, as there was later over Soviet involvement in contiguous Ethiopia.

News of the presence of military bases in Somalia has increased our fears and we hope it is not true. Some Somali brothers have admitted {having received} technical aid and we fear this is the beginning of more involvement.³²⁶

Although the President's language indicated aversion to the presence of either superpower in the region, Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid felt that Nimeiri viewed only Soviet, not American, presence as a threat.³²⁷

Despite these concerns, however, relations between the Sudan and the USSR remained good and the Sudan sent a military delegation to Moscow in July 1975. Upon his return the Sudanese Chief of Staff said that his talks in Moscow and Yugoslavia had been very successful and had strengthened the Sudan's military relations with these countries.³²⁸ He said that the aim of the visit had been to obtain military aircraft and spare parts, and that the Soviets had shown themselves ready to supply the Sudan with its requirements.³²⁹ In December 1975 a high-level Soviet delegation, led by the Deputy Chairman of the Presidium, arrived for a five-day visit and in February 1976 an agreement on Soviet military aid was ratified (though its terms were not made public).³³⁰ In April 1976 Soviet Chief of Staff General Kulikov visited the Sudan, praised the "firm relations"

³²⁶ Daily Star, Beirut, August 20, 1975, cited in FBIS, August 21, 1975, pp. 14-6.

³²⁷ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

³²⁸ Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, July 29, 1975, cited in FBIS, July 29, 1975, p. 18.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, December 30, 1975, cited in FBIS, December 31, p. 17. Omdurman Domestic Service, February 25, 1976, cited in FBIS, February 26, p. 11.

between the two nations, and said that the Soviet Union planned to aid and develop the Sudanese army.³³¹ On June 30, 1976, only days before the coup/invasion, a special Soviet envoy visited Khartoum for "political consultations."³³²

Policy toward the United States was also favorable during the remainder of the 1971-1976 period. Commercial and financial dealings with the United States and American companies increased significantly, as did American aid to the Sudanese development.³³³ Although there continued to be criticism of the situation in Vietnam, the sharp criticism aimed at the United States in the 1969-1971 period was replaced by appeals to the United States or praise for North Vietnam, without reference to the United States. For example, as early as November 1971 President Nimeiri

³³¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, April 5, 1976, cited in FBIS, April 6, 1976, p. 15.

³³² Omdurman domestic Service, June 30, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 1, 1976, pp. 11-2.

³³³ Examples of increased financial and commercial intercourse with the United States included: an American grant of \$10 million for the Rahad agricultural scheme and \$2.2 million in food in mid-1973 (Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1973), Exim Bank loans of \$10 million and \$17.5 million for Sudanair's purchase of two Boeing 707's and other equipment (Omdurman Domestic Service, May 10, 1973, cited in FBIS, June 6, 1973, p. T6), two Exim bank loan guarantees for \$2.5 million each for cotton milling equipment (Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1974) 1974), the granting of 39 licenses for oil-prospecting on the Red Sea to Chevron, a branch of American Standard Oil (Arab Report and Record, October 1-16, 1974), a visit to Khartoum by Chase Manhattan Bank President David Rockefeller at the invitation of Nimeiri, to discuss investment by the Bank in the Sudan and resulting in an agreement to open an office there (Omdurman Domestic Service, January 23, 1975, cited in FBIS, January 24, 1975, p. 13), American assistance with a cement factory on the Red Sea (Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1975) and participation by Arizona-Colorado Land and Cattle Company in

appealed to the United States to stop the Vietnam war immediately and to put an end to the misery of the heroic Vietnamese people so that they may become their own masters, free from intervention.³³⁴

The humiliating withdrawal of the United States from South Vietnam in May 1975 was greeted only with congratulations from Nimeiri to the North Vietnamese on the liberation of South Vietnam, with no comment on the United States.³³⁵

The major event in Sudanese policy toward the United States during this period was the Sudanese handling of the killing of two American and one Belgian diplomat in the Saudi Arabian Embassy in March 1973 by members of the Palestinian Black September group. Despite good relations with the PLO, the initial reaction of President Nimeiri was a swift and vehement denunciation of the attack, accusations that the head of the Fatah office in Khartoum and some of his associates had been involved, and suspension of all activities by the Palestinian organizations in the Sudan.³³⁶ Nimeiri's anger appeared to spring from the fact that the Sudan, despite its aid to the Palestinian organizations, despite its not being "the most American-frequented Arab country," had had its "land's sanctity violated, {its} government placed in an embarrassing situation and {its} laws violated."³³⁷ He described the incident as

a million-acre commercial ranch in the Sudan (Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1975).

³³⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, November 15, 1971, cited in FBIS, November 16, 1971, p. T6.

³³⁵ LPA, Hanoi, May 10, 1975, cited in FBIS, May 12, 1975, p. 18.

³³⁶ Address by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, March 6, 1973, cited in FBIS, March 7, 1973, pp. T1-7.

³³⁷ Ibid.

"a criminal act which has nothing to do with revolutions and bravery. There is no risk in entering a country which opens its doors and windows to you... It is a clear, evident crime committed in the land of Sudan to which the laws of Sudan apply and which can be tried by Sudanese courts in accordance with republican decrees. I will ask justice in our country to take its course."³³⁸

While not directly accusing Yasir Arafat of lying when he denied Fatah's responsibility in the matter, Nimeiri stated that "if that was so, then Fatah should condemn those responsible."³³⁹ He claimed that the act was detrimental to the interests of the Palestinian people. A storm of protest erupted in the Arab media and the Sudanese delegation to a March 1973 meeting of the Arab Labor Organization walked out after the organization voted by a 41-4 margin to send a cable to Nimeiri asking for humane treatment of the eight Palestinians arrested.³⁴⁰ Immediate Arab mediation within the Arab League brought about a re-opening of the PLO office in Khartoum on April 7, 1973. On April 25, 1973 Nimeiri declared that the incident had been a test for Sudanese-American relations and that the Sudan's handling of it had left "no margin for a black spot on these relations."³⁴¹

During the sixteen months between the killing of the diplomats and the conclusion of the trials in June 1974 the Sudanese government was subject to intense pressure, particularly in the last four months before the end of the trials.³⁴² There was pressure from within the

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Reuters, Cairo, March 8, 1973, cited in FBIS, March 8, 1973, p. A1.

³⁴¹ Arab Report and Record, April 16-30, 1973.

³⁴² Interview with Mansour Khalid.

Sudan, first not to put the Palestinians on trial, but once it was clear that they would be tried, not to punish them. The Arab states, particularly Algeria, exerted pressure on the Sudanese government to be lenient.³⁴³

There was no mention of American pressure during the period before the trials ended, but there were certainly efforts by the US government to assure the judicial punishment of the defendants.³⁴⁴ On June 24, 1974 following a much-delayed trial, a Sudanese court sentenced the eight defendants to life imprisonment, but on the same day it was announced that the President had commuted the sentences to seven years imprisonment and

had decided to hand over the convicted men to the PLO to carry out the sentences passed against them, in its capacity as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.³⁴⁵

President Sadat agreed to have the eight men brought to Cairo, relieving the Sudanese government of a potential source of difficulties. On June 25, 1974 the United States government recalled Ambassador William Brewer (who had replaced slain Ambassador Cleo Noel in September 1973) "for consultations," saying that the decision to hand the convicted men over to the PLO "did not live up to repeated assurances given by the Sudanese government" that the case would be handled in a just manner.³⁴⁶ The Sudanese charge in Washington was

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ This is confirmed by an official of the US Department of State who was involved in US-Sudanese relations.

³⁴⁵ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 24, 1974, cited in FBIS, June 25, 1974, pp. 14-5.

³⁴⁶ Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1974.

called into the State Department and informed of the American reaction to the decision. It appeared that the American government understood the Sudan's dilemma and was less surprised than it may have seemed publicly, although American officials told the Sudanese charge that Sudanese actions were unacceptable.³⁴⁷ Arab sources had indicated before the decision was made on the fate of the eight Palestinians that, although they would be sentenced to death, Nimeiri had often assured Palestinian officials that the eight were "in safe hands" and would be released after their trial.³⁴⁸ Although the Minister of Finance indicated that there had been some pressure from American financial institutions over this incident, Nimeiri more or less denied direct pressure from the US:

Pressures, in the literal sense of the word, are not forthcoming nor effective in any way whatever, but investments of American companies in the development projects in the Sudan are still active...³⁴⁹

In November 1974 the American Ambassador returned to Khartoum.

Contrary to President Nimeiri's early comment that the Sudan's handling of the diplomats' murder would be a test of Sudanese-American relations, the Sudanese reaction appears to have been more a question of violated national sovereignty than a concern for relations with the United States. The decision to hand the eight Palestinians over to the PLO probably could not have gone any other way: the pressure on the government from within the Sudan and from the Arab nations was too

³⁴⁷ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

³⁴⁸ Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, June 15, 1974, cited in FBIS, June 17, 1974, p. 14.

³⁴⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, October 8, 1974, cited in FBIS, October 9, 1974, pp. 12-3.

great and the potential uproar from execution or lengthy imprisonment of the eight men would have been more destabilizing to the Sudan's domestic and foreign politics than it could have borne. Relations between the Sudan and the United States did not appear to be significantly affected, and remained good for the rest of the 1971-1976 period.

Policy towards Eastern Europe

Sudanese policy towards most of the Soviet Union's Eastern European allies was based on a perception of them as a bloc.³⁵⁰ With the exception of Romania, policy towards the Warsaw Pact nations varied along with policy towards the USSR. Bulgaria in particular was the object of the same policy as the Soviet Union. The Sudanese Ambassador in Bulgaria was withdrawn at the same time as his colleague in Moscow, and the Bulgarian Ambassador in Khartoum was expelled at the same time as a lower-ranking Soviet diplomat, at the beginning of August 1971.³⁵¹ These measures taken against Bulgaria were in response to press reports that CPS Secretary-General Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub had stayed at the Bulgarian Embassy in the interval between his escape from detention on June 30 and the launching of the coup on July 19 as well as the protests in the Soviet and East European press against the execution of Sudanese communists.³⁵² Not only had the Soviets, the Czechs, and East Germans protested the executions individually, but

³⁵⁰ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

³⁵¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 1, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 2, 1971, p. T14. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, August 3, 1971, cited in FBIS, August 4, 1971, p. T5.

³⁵² Interview of President Nimeiri, London Observer, July 13, 1971, cited in Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1971. Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1971.

also the leaders of the Warsaw Pact nations, at an "unofficial summit" in the Crimea on August 2, 1971, united in condemning the "reign of terror" in Sudan.³⁵³ The high level of contacts with the nations of Eastern Europe which had existed during the May 1969-July 1971 period virtually ceased until "normalization" between the Sudan and the Soviet Union in January 1973, when relations with these nations improved.³⁵⁴ As with the Soviet Union, Sudanese relations with these Eastern European nations, however revived after January 1973, did not attain the level of 1969-1971.

Romania, which had not been treated as a member of the Soviet bloc in 1969-1971 (because of its relationship with Israel), was an exception to Sudanese policy towards the Soviet bloc in 1971-1976 as well. Viewed by the Sudanese as a maverick in the Warsaw Pact, Romania took the initiative of contacting the Sudan, and in December 1971 the two nations once again established diplomatic relations.³⁵⁵ At the same time Romania agreed to provide a loan of \$75 million with easy repayments, along with experts, to further Sudanese development projects.³⁵⁶ Relations between Romania and the Sudan flourished in all

³⁵³ Tass, August 2, 1971, cited in Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1971.

³⁵⁴ Examples of the revival of relations with the Eastern European nations include: an agreement on health cooperation with East Germany in December 1973 (Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1973), reports of increased cotton trade with Hungary (Arab Report and Record, April 16-31, 1974), a five-year trade agreement with Czechoslovakia in September 1974 (Arab Report and Record, September 1-15, 1974), purchase of \$11 million in railroad equipment from Hungary in October 1974 (Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1974), and a \$42 million development loan from East Germany in August 1975 (Arab Report and Record, August 16-31, 1975).

³⁵⁵ Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1971.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

fields following restoration of relations and appeared to follow the pattern of the People's Republic of China rather than that of the other Eastern European allies of the Soviet Union. Both were viewed as socialist countries but with a foreign policy line independent of the Soviet Union, although this was less the case with Romania than with the PRC. As the Sudan sought during this period to establish a position between the two superpowers, the appeal of strong relations with Romania was obvious. It may also have been the case that, as with the Sudan's unimpaired relations with some Western European allies of the United States in 1969-1971, the Sudan wanted to maintain ties with some nation close to the superpower with which it viewed itself in conflict, and Romania's relatively independent foreign policy made it the most logical candidate.

President Ceausescu visited Khartoum in April 1972 and agreements were signed on economic/technical cooperation and trade.³⁵⁷ The possibility of joint companies in mining, agriculture and forestry were also discussed. President Nimeiri returned the visit in April 1973 and consular, technical and cultural agreements were reached.³⁵⁸ Delegations were frequently exchanged throughout the period and meetings of the Sudanese-Romanian Joint Ministerial Committee were

³⁵⁷ Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1972.

³⁵⁸ Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1973.

³⁵⁹ Delegations exchanged included: a group from the Romanian Socialist Unity front at the end of December 1971 (Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1971) a Romanian economic delegation in March 1972 (Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1972) a Sudanese economic delegation in December 1973 (Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1972); a Sudanese agricultural delegation in February 1973 (Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1973) a Romanian oil delegation in August 1973 (Arab Report and Record,

held.³⁵⁹ In addition to the Joint Ministerial Committee, a joint political committee was established between the Romanian Communist Party and the SSU in March 1974.³⁶⁰ The showpiece of Romanian assistance was the construction of the new People's Assembly hall, construction of which was begun in November 1974.³⁶¹

Policy towards Western Europe

The Western European allies of the United States were not perceived as a monolithic bloc, but more as a force of their own.³⁶² All the nations of Europe were viewed as potential sources of aid and the Foreign Minister's March 1974 European tour was intended to promote European participation in Sudanese development.³⁶³

United Kingdom

The political estrangement from the United Kingdom which had occurred in 1969-1971 all but disappeared. While the Sudanese government criticized the Britain for its policy in southern Africa, the criticism was not widely reported in the Sudan and had lost the

August 1-15, 1973) the visit of the Romanian Minister of Industrial Construction for the November 1974 inauguration of the People's Assembly building in Khartoum (Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1974); and a Romanian delegation which attended the May 25th anniversary celebration in May 1976 (Omdurman Domestic Service, May 27, 1976, cited in FBIS, May 28, 1976, p. 13.).

³⁶⁰ Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1974.

³⁶¹ Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1974.

³⁶² Interview with Mansour Khalid.

³⁶³ He visited Britain, France, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, West Germany and Austria. Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1974.

³⁶⁴ It appears that only once did the Sudan criticize the UK in any case, and this was very early in the period. MENA, Cairo,

invective of 1969-1971.³⁶⁴ President Nimeiri paid a very cordial five-day official visit to the UK in March 1973.³⁶⁵ Accompanied by a high-level delegation, the President met with the major British officials and issued with them a joint statement, which declared that the two countries had reached agreement on compensation for the British companies nationalized in 1970 and on a British capital assistance program of over \$30 million over the next four years.³⁶⁶ Nimeiri also said he planned to resume military cooperation with the UK through the purchase of equipment and the training of officers. Nimeiri noted that cooperation between the Sudan and Britain was

'pleasant and everlasting', based on personal relationships which were stronger than the official ties between the two countries.'³⁶⁷

Returning to the Sudan, Nimeiri said that Britain's "changed attitudes" towards the Middle East, particularly its condemnation of the Israeli raid on Beirut, had helped to strengthen Sudanese-British bilateral ties.³⁶⁸ In addition to numerous private visits, there were

reported that the Sudanese government had denounced agreement reached between the government of Rhodesia and the UK. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, December 5, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 6, 1971, pp. T6-7.

³⁶⁵ Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1973.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Arab Report and Record, April 16-31, 1973.

³⁶⁹ These include, among others: Princess Anne's visit to the Sudan in February 1973 (Arab Report and Record, February 15-28, 1973), Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid's visit to London in April 1972 to seek British aid for southern Sudanese relief and resettlement (Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1972), the visit of the Commander-in-Chief of British Land Forces to Khartoum in February 1975 to discuss military cooperation (The Guardian, London, cited in Arab Report and Record, February 16-31, 1975), and the Minister

numerous official visits during this period.³⁶⁹

British aid to the Sudan flowed in greater quantities than at any time since the "May Revolution."³⁷⁰ Business connections between the Sudan and Britain also multiplied rapidly. British firms were involved in many major Sudanese development projects.³⁷¹

France

Policy towards France continued more or less as in the previous period: friendly relations on the political/diplomatic level, but with little substance in the form of aid, trade, and visits. Signs of stronger relations began to appear with the February 1975 visit to Khartoum of the French Minister of Equipment, the first visit by a member of the French government since Sudanese independence.³⁷² As Le Monde noted, until that point

of Agriculture's visit in January 1973 to discuss British purchase of Sudanese produce. (Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1973).

³⁷⁰ Examples include: a loan of over \$20 million on August 28, 1971 (Arab Report and Record, August 16-31, 1971), an interest-free loan of over \$2.5 million in January 1972 (Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1972), and a grant of over \$5 million for transport, communications and power in August 1975. (Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1975). Also Britain (along with West Germany) offered assistance in police training. (Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1972).

³⁷¹ There are far more contracts than can be included here but only a sample include the following: A Sudanese-British development company was established in November 1973 for Red Sea fisheries, tourism and mining projects. (Arab Report and Record, November 16-31, 1973). Lloyd's bank of Britain agreed to loan the Sudan almost \$20 million to finance the building of a sugar factory. (Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1974). A British firm was granted a million acre concession for oil prospecting in the Red Sea area in February 1974 (Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1974). A British firm won a \$15 million contract for constructing a laboratory in the Sudan. (Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1975). British firms were predominantly concerned in the huge

the links between Paris and Khartoum have been fairly loose and this has also applied to trade... Nimeiri heaped particular praise on France's foreign policy.³⁷²

A rapid acceleration in bilateral relations predicted by Le Monde did not really occur until after July 1976, but there was certainly greater communication at a high level following the French Minister's visit. In May 1976 the French Secretary of State included the Sudan on his African tour and in June 1976 President Nimeiri visited France following his American tour.³⁷⁴

West Germany

Of all the nations of Western Europe, the most dramatic change occurred in Sudanese policy towards West Germany, which had been viewed in 1969-1971 along with the United States, as hostile to the Arab world and the Sudan and a meddler in the southern Sudan. As with the United States, a change in the Sudanese policy towards West Germany was supposed to have been based on a change in West Germany policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, but relations were resumed in December 1971 at German initiative without any major change in German policy.³⁷⁵ Within a month a West German economic delegation was

Kenana Sugar Factory project, including both Lonrho as the project manager and McAlpine for construction. (Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1975). Airport improvement contracts worth \$60 million were won by British firms in May 1976. (Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1976).

³⁷² Le Monde, Paris, cited in FBIS, February 7, 1975, p. 13.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Agence France Presse, May 1, 1976, Paris, cited in FBIS, May 6, 1976, p. 13. Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1976.

³⁷⁵ Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1971. Statement by Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, December 17, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 20, 1971, pp. T4-7.

visiting Khartoum to discuss German aid to Sudanese development projects, and a visit was planned for a Sudanese delegation in Bonn.³⁷⁶ Before the end of 1972, West German aid to the Sudan had resumed.³⁷⁷ Visits resumed between the two nations as well and following the November 1974 visit of the West German Minister for Economic Cooperation plans were made for trilateral cooperation among West Germany, the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, making the Sudan the first developing country expected to benefit from trilateral cooperation with West Germany and an Arab oil-producer.³⁷⁸

Other Western European Nations

Aid from Scandinavia was courted during this period as well, particularly in view of the long-time concern of Scandinavian relief agencies with the southern Sudan conflict. Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid toured Scandinavia in December 1971 to that end and reported that Scandinavian governments and relief organizations were prepared to participate in a rehabilitation program for the southern Sudan.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 19, 1972, cited in FBIS, January 24, 1972, pp. T7-8.

³⁷⁷ West Germany donated a satellite station in December 1972 (Omdurman Domestic Service, December 7, 1972, cited in FBIS, January 13, 1972, p. T5), and offered assistance in building a television station in Wad Medani (Omdurman Domestic Service, December 27, 1972, cited in FBIS, December 29, 1972, p. T6.). In July 1973 agreement was reached on a major German loan of over \$20 million, at 3/4% interest, repayable in 50 years (Omdurman Domestic Service, July 7, 1973, cited in FBIS, July 9, 1973, p. T3).

³⁷⁸ Other visits included: the foreign policy press advisor of the West German Chancellor in April, 1972 (Omdurman Domestic Service, April 10, 1972, cited in FBIS, April 13, 1972, p. T13) and the visit of the Sudanese Minister of Information to Bonn in June 1972 for talks on cultural cooperation (Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1972).

³⁷⁹ Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1971.

The Foreign Minister again toured Scandinavia in March 1974, meeting with leaders in Sweden, Finland and Norway.³⁸⁰ The Scandinavian countries provided assistance not only with southern Sudanese rehabilitation but also with other development projects.³⁸¹

Relations with the other Western European nations continued more or less as before. There were aid and trade relationships with such countries as Italy and the Netherlands, but without a high-profile political content. This appeared to be precisely the kind of relationship Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid wanted with the great powers. On an April 1972 visit to Italy, he said that he regarded the Sudan's relations with Italy as a model of what international links should be.³⁸² Italy provided a number of development loans to the Sudan during this period.³⁸³ The Netherlands also provided aid for southern rehabilitation and development.³⁸⁴

³⁸⁰ Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1974.

³⁸¹ The Danish government provided a loan of about \$4 million to finance a slaughterhouse and the contract was granted to a Danish firm (Arab Report and Record, June 16-31, 1974). Another Danish loan was provided for a dairy at Juba in September 1974 (Arab Report and Record, September 16-31, 1974). The Norwegian Church Relief Agency provided a four year loan for southern rehabilitation (reported as \$700 million, which is probably a misprint, but as this was not a government-to-government loan, it was impossible to verify the amount) (Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1974). The Norwegian government gave a loan of \$4.4 million in March 1975 for projects in the southern Sudan (Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1975).

³⁸² Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1972.

³⁸³ These included: \$15 million in May 1972 for construction projects and another for \$6 million for rural electrification in November 1974 (Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1972 and November 1-15, 1974), and \$10 million for a jute factory in May 1975 (Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1975).

³⁸⁴ They offered to finance a bridge in southern Sudan in January 1973 (Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1973)

Policy toward the Arab World

Sudanese policy toward Egypt and the Arab world in 1971-1976 changed substantially from its policy in the previous period. Growing out of the new emphasis on foreign policy as a tool of economic development, the shift to a position between the two superpowers, and the lessons learned from the failed experiment with political union, the Sudan moved away from the "radical" Arab camp into a middle position among the Arab states. It also switched its goals from involvement in high-profile unity schemes to pursuit of lower-level "integration" with Egypt after an initial period of cool relations between the two nations in late 1972. Following the short-lived dispute, the Sudan moved steadily closer to Egypt between 1973 and 1976. Bilateral ties became strong once again and full support was given to Sadat's changing stance in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The other major hallmark of the Sudan's Arab policy during this period -- the move into a position in the mainstream of the Arab world -- was not jeopardized by the close support of Egypt on regional issues. Instead, as Egypt became slowly more distant from some of the Arab states on the questions of the disengagement and Sinai II agreements, the Sudan maintained its position in the Arab world by attempting to divorce its good bilateral relations with the Arab states from its support of the increasingly controversial Egyptian position on a multi-lateral level.

As with the Sudan's new alignment between the superpowers, its new mainstream position in the Arab world was facilitated by the "de-radicalization" of Egypt under Sadat, though its main cause lay in the

new orientation of Sudanese foreign policy away from ideological concerns and toward domestic priorities of economic development and national unity. The new intimacy with Saudi Arabia and strong ties with some of the other Arab oil producers, without sacrificing good relations with the rest of the Arab world, would not only provide a new influx of financial aid and steer the Sudan clear of ephemeral unity schemes (which would be sure to alienate the southern Sudanese), but also would bring the Sudan back into a position it had so long enjoyed in the Arab world: that of a moderate country with good relations with all other Arab states and a closeness to Egypt understood and accepted by the Arab world in general.

Although the Sudan's new regional policy in the Arab world was consistent with its new international position, neither its Arab policy -- nor its relationship with Egypt specifically -- was much related to international issues. Indeed, both aspects of policy -- the Sudan's position in both the regional and international arenas -- were results of internal factors: the new direction of foreign policy, the new personnel at the decision-making level of foreign policy, and the disenchantment with ideological positions after the July 1971 coup attempt. Even such regional factors as the October 1973 had no direct effect on Sudanese policy.³⁸⁵ This was due no doubt to the fact that the war had a unifying effect on the Arab states in the short term. Of course the October 1973 war, and the subsequent changes in Egyptian policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict, were to have important, though indirect, effects on Sudanese policy in the long run, as the rift between Egypt and the Arab states grew in the late

³⁸⁵ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

1970's, but this did not become fully apparent until after 1976.

The Sudan's new alignment in the Arab world was manifested in four ways: (1) full support of positions on which there appeared to be general Arab consensus; (2) a neutral position, or very mild response, to inter-Arab disputes so as to maintain good relations with both sides of any quarrel among them; (3) a return to the traditional Sudanese interest in playing a mediating role among the Arab nations; and (4) the development of good bilateral relations with virtually all the Arab states. In no case did the Sudan have a major dispute with an Arab state except where the Sudan itself was directly concerned and where the matter concerned Sudanese sovereignty and domestic politics. Bad relations with Iraq in the year following the July 1971 coup attempt resulted from Iraq's alleged involvement in the coup. Problems with Egypt in late 1972 were closely connected with Sudanese sovereignty, domestic politics and personnel. Tensions with Libya in 1972 and sporadically throughout the period touched closely on questions of Sudanese sovereignty, and a brief dispute with the PLO and some of the Arab states in 1973 erupted over the Black September incident in Khartoum.

Full support of policies on which there was general agreement among the Arab countries was not difficult. The Sudan had always supported such policies and, in any case, there were very few of them. The most obvious example is the October 1973 war, during which the Sudan dispatched troops to the Canal, in addition to those already stationed there, and places its "skies, territory and sea at the service of the

²⁸⁶ Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1973.

battle."³⁸⁶ The Sudan joined most Arab states in denouncing Jordan during its conflict with the Palestinians in July 1971.

A clearer example is the Sudan's reaction to the Hussein Plan of March 1972. The Sudan's initial reaction was slow and mild. President Nimeiri announced on March 19 that the various departments were studying the plan and that a Jordanian delegation was expected to arrive in Khartoum from Cairo that night to explain the plan.³⁸⁷ In the last week of March, following rejection of the Hussein Plan by a number of Arab states (including Libya, Kuwait, Egypt and Morocco) the President sent the Sudan's response to King Hussein, stating that the Sudan saw as necessary: the liberation of the occupied territory, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and Arab solidarity.³⁸⁸ He also called for an Arab summit. On April 6, 1972 Egypt broke diplomatic relations with Jordan over the question of the Hussein Plan.³⁸⁹ Within a few days it had become clear that an Arab consensus on the Plan was emerging and it was negative. The Sudanese armed forces newspaper then published an article declaring that Nimeiri's statement of two weeks before had stressed the dangers of the Hussein Plan as a "comprehensive liquidationist plan" and a "threat to the Arab front's cohesion."³⁹⁰ The article attacked

³⁸⁷ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, March 19, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 21, 1972, p. T10.

³⁸⁸ Middle East News Agency, Damascus, April 5, 1972, cited in FBIS, April 5, 1972, p. T8.

³⁸⁹ The Egyptian spokesman suggested the Hussein Plan was just another version of the Allon Plan. Middle East News Agency, April 6, 1972, cited in FBIS, April 6, 1972, p. G16.

³⁹⁰ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, April 8, 1972, cited in FBIS, April 13, 1972, p. T13.

those who attempted to portray Nimeiri's call for an Arab summit as ... an invitation to discuss the plan. Nimeiri's invitation was a way of containing the mistakes resulting from Jordan's proposal for a partial settlement.³⁹¹

It concluded that President Nimeiri believed that the "situation demands a broader Arab movement than mere rejection and denouncement."³⁹² The official position was only reinterpreted as a severe denunciation of the Hussein Plan after the Arab consensus had emerged.

Another manifestation of the Sudan's new alignment in the Arab world was its policy of taking a neutral stand -- or responding very mildly -- to disputes among the Arab states where there was no clear consensus. The Sudan took no position on the Iraq-Kuwait border dispute which boiled over in March 1973, nor on the Syrian-Iraqi tensions over Syrian damming of the Euphrates River in April 1975. In June 1976, even after Egyptian-Syrian relations had deteriorated badly over Syrian actions in Lebanon, the Sudanese reaction was very mild:

I believe that Syria invaded Lebanon to stop the fighting there. But it is difficult for the Syrians to complete their task. Stopping the civil war through military intervention will not lead to peace and security, especially if intervention ... is undertaken by states and not by the Arab League.³⁹³

An advantage of the Sudan's middle-of-the-road position in the Arab world was that it could once again offer itself as a mediator in inter-Arab disputes. Although its efforts were not crowned with success, the Sudan did attempt to reconcile King Hussein with Yasir

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Statement by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, June 18, 1976, cited in FBIS, June 21, 1976, pp. 12-3.

Arafat and Egypt with Libya in late 1974, and to mediate between Libya and several Arab states with which it had poor relations. An offer was also made to reconcile warring forces in Lebanon and Sudanese troops were among the first to arrive in the new Arab League peacekeeping force in June 1976.³⁹⁴

Another dimension of this approach was the Sudan's promotion of Arab summits to deal with inter-Arab disputes. A multi-lateral approach was consistent with the Sudan's position in the Arab world and on most major inter-Arab issues the Sudan was among the first to call for an Arab summit, as in the case of the Hussein Plan, the beginning of the Moroccan-Algerian conflict over the Spanish Sahara (January 1976) -- or at least was among the first to suggest joint action by the Arab states, as in the case of Lebanon in June 1976.

The most important manifestation of the Sudan's new approach to Arab politics was its cultivation of improved relations with the Arab "conservatives" without neglecting the maintenance of good relations with old "radical" friends. The importance of bilateral relations with the Arab states grew even greater as Egypt became involved in its new relationship with the United States and its new approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict after the 1973 war. With one foot on either side of the growing rift between Egypt and the Arab world, the Sudan was able to maintain its good relations with both because the split between them had not yet widened to the point where the Sudan would have to make a clear choice. The balancing act was maintained through the end of this period by the Sudan's success in separating its

³⁹⁴ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

relations with the Arab countries on a bilateral level from its support of Egypt on the Arab-Israeli conflict on a multilateral level.

Egypt

For almost a year after the abortive July 1971 coup, relations between the Sudan and Egypt continued to be good. Even in sensitive matters of domestic politics, Egyptian help was offered and accepted. Egyptian helicopters, for example, were used to reach outlying areas during the Presidential referendum of September-October 1971.³⁹⁵

Not until June 1972 did public signs of strain begin to appear. By fall of that year relations between the two nations had reached an almost unprecedented low point, with public criticism between Presidents Nimeiri and Sadat and open quarrels over economic and educational issues, as well as over more general questions of the Sudan's relationship with the Arab world and renewal of relations with the United States. Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid viewed the dispute primarily as a result of the Sudan's conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord in March 1972, which the Egyptians may have perceived as a turning away from the Arab world, and of Egyptian highhandedness.³⁹⁶ The Egyptians appeared to view the problem as one of personnel, seeing that virtually all the Arab Nationalists were out of high policy-making posts and foreign policy was now dominated by a man whom they regarded as both pro-Western and, to some extent, anti-Egyptian. Although both explanations are correct to a certain degree, the roots of the dispute between the Sudan and Egypt in late 1972 appear to be

³⁹⁵ Interview with a member of the RCC.

³⁹⁶ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

much more complex than either of these self-serving explanations.

The unusually bad bilateral relations between June 1972 and January 1973 probably had their roots much earlier, perhaps as early as the April 1971 meeting of the four Tripoli Charter states in Cairo. Nimeiri left for Moscow, assured that the others were not contemplating immediate union, only to find that the others left immediately for Libya and declared the inauguration of the Federation of Arab Republics.³⁹⁷ RCC members had felt ever since Nasser's death that Sadat did not understand the Sudan's position on the Tripoli Charter negotiations, that he could not or would not control Qadafi, and that in any case he was only wanted to "make a splash" by announcing a larger union than Nasser had ever achieved.³⁹⁸ Nimeiri's retrospective comment on this (in October 1972, in the midst of the tensions with Egypt) was as follows:

During Jamal Abdel Nasir's days relations were never strained because there was a leader who understood Sudan's conditions... and always tried to spare Sudan any complications... {after Nasser's death} As-Sadat, together with Al-Quadaffi, decided to establish the confederation without taking our domestic conditions into consideration... On Tuesday April 13, 1971 I felt that As-Sadat was interested only in the establishment of the confederation, regardless of what might happen to the Sudan... The meeting {April 1971} was not for the purpose of establishing the confederation because our stand on this matter was firm and clear.³⁹⁹

There was, however, little sign of trouble at the time.

³⁹⁷ Interview with members of the RCC.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ Interview of President Nimeiri by Fu'ad Matar, Middle East News Agency, Damascus to Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 25, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 27, 1972, pp. T4-5.

Another early incident which may have played a role in the 1972 problems between the Sudan and Egypt occurred during the three days of the communist coup attempt in July 1971. While the leaders of the coup were in power in Khartoum, RCC member and Minister of Defense Gen. Khalid Hassan Abbas rushed to Cairo, interrupting a visit to Yugoslavia. Sadat was quick to offer him the Sudanese troops stationed on the Suez Canal, or any funds necessary.⁴⁰⁰ The Minister of Defense told Sadat that he would take the troops but money would serve no purpose. Although the Egyptian government helped by airlifting the Sudanese troops to Khartoum, and may have provided the intelligence that two of the coup leaders were on a flight from London which was then forced to land in Libya, Egyptian authorities denied Gen. Khalid permission to make a broadcast to Sudanese troops on Egypt radio.⁴⁰¹ Sadat's unwillingness to permit the broadcast was viewed at that time by some RCC members as evidence that Sadat wanted to hedge his bets in order not to totally alienate the coup-makers in Khartoum in case they succeeded in holding on the reins of power.⁴⁰² Sadat did not, however, recognize the three day regime of July 19-21 and there was no outward sign of problems between him and the RCC at that time. Both of these early incidents, however, were later mentioned by Nimeiri and other members of the RCC and cannot be discounted as factors contributing to the 1972 dispute.

⁴⁰⁰ This account was given during an interview for this research with a member of the RCC.

⁴⁰¹ None of the officials interviewed was able, or perhaps willing, to say they knew how the Libyan government knew of the presence of the two coup leaders on the BOAC flight which was brought down in Libya.

⁴⁰² Interview with a member of the RCC.

A major factor in the tensions between the Sudan and Egypt was what the Sudanese side regarded as Egyptian high-handedness in dealing with the Sudan, a complaint which appears to be quite accurate. While Sadat did not consult the Sudanese government on matters which might affect the Sudan as well as Egypt, the Sudan was criticized for doing the same thing:

Maybe As-Sadat has a right not to consult with his colleagues in the government on matters of decision. But we assume it is our right to ask him to inform us about the decisions he intends to make and to consult with us... He makes decisions which he believes are suitable for him without consulting us, while charges are levelled against us if we adopt stands which we consider necessary and suitable.

As-Sadat declared that 1971 would be a decisive year, whether through peace or war. We were surprised by this decision. He should have consulted us on the matter especially in view of the fact that the nature of military relations between Egypt and the Sudan makes this incumbent upon us. We have forces on the Suez front and if the decision is going to be war, those forces are going to fight... We should not be taken by surprise by decisions on matters of destiny without the Egyptian president first informing us and consulting us on these matters. Then As-Sadat went back on the decisive decision {sic} and here again he did not inform us or consult with us... As-Sadat told me in Alexandria that he was in the process of reaching an understanding with the United States... to begin work on the Suez Canal clearances and that he had accepted the offer. He did not ask us our opinion on the matter. All he did was just inform us. But when we began a dialogue with the United States he encouraged those who say that we have sold out the issue. As-Sadat does not consult us on any matter. Is it logical that we hear from the UAE president that Egypt has nominated Mahmud Riyad to be Arab League Secretary-General? I learned this from Sheikh Zayid. As-Sadat does not consult, and he encourages those who level accusations against us... if he comes to an understanding with Saudi Arabia, that is something natural in his opinion. But if we come to an understanding with Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi and the rest of the Gulf states then he encourages his media to say that this move on our part is at the orders of imperialism...⁴⁰³

⁴⁰³ Interview of President Nimeiri by Fu'ad Matar, An Nahar, Beirut, cited by MENA, Damascus to MENA, Cairo, October 26, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 27, 1972, pp. T9-12.

The first clear sign of strain appeared in June 1972 when the Sudan abstained in an Arab League Council vote on the Secretary-General's post, a move explained by Nimeiri's comment that the Egyptian government had not informed the Sudan of its intention to nominate Mahmud Riyad. At the end of June 1972 Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid went to Cairo to meet with his Egyptian counterpart. In an interview, mention was made of allegations in the Egyptian press that "cast doubt on the Sudan's role and its ability to contribute to the Arab struggle" and that the Sudan was "abandoning its Arab commitment."⁴⁰⁴ The Foreign Minister said that because of the Addis Ababa accord the Sudan was now stronger and, as the protector of the "back of the Arab world", was now more capable of discharging its historic role.⁴⁰⁵ He referred to understandings reached with the Egyptian foreign minister which would "greatly help to achieve complete cooperation in a clearer atmosphere."⁴⁰⁶

In a press conference a few days later, the Foreign Minister said that the trip to Cairo had been arranged at the mid-June Rabat summit and that an agreement had been reached which would resolve all outstanding economic and educational disagreements between the Sudan and Egypt.⁴⁰⁷ The educational and economic problems to which he referred were a dispute over the fields of specialization offered at the Khartoum branch of Cairo University, a matter of some importance

⁴⁰⁴ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 26, 1972, cited in FBIS, June 28, 1972, pp. T2-3.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 28, 1972, cited in FBIS, June 29, 1972, pp. T5-6.

since it produced more graduates each year than the University of Khartoum. In line with the new emphasis on economic development the Sudan had asked that the Egyptian university produce more technical graduates. The economic problems referred to were connected with the Sudan's decision not to sell certain commodities to Egypt any longer -- items such as sesame, which had normally only been sold for hard currency. Egypt's exemption was withdrawn by the Sudan because Egypt was reportedly reselling these commodities for a hard-currency profit itself.⁴⁰⁸ By the end of June, however, these problems were on their way to being resolved. Had it not been for two additional events which revived all outstanding grievances, relations might have remained at this level.

The first of these incidents was President Nimeiri's announcement on July 1, 1972 that he was considering restoring diplomatic relations with the United States. This precipitated very critical comments in the Egyptian press in which the Sudan was lumped with North Yemen, which was accused of renewing diplomatic relations with the United States for a cash payment.⁴⁰⁹ The Sudanese press responded to these attacks, but even this sniping in the newspapers did not drive relations between the two countries to the point to which they were led by an incident at the end of September 1972.

On September 20, 1972 five Libyan aircraft carrying arms to aid Idi Amin in Uganda's conflict with Tanzania were impounded in Khartoum and sent back to Libya. The Sudanese government pointed out that the

⁴⁰⁸ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

⁴⁰⁹ Al Ahram, Cairo, July 6, 1972, cited by Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, July 7, 1972, cited in FBIS, July 7, 1972, p. G4.

Sudan had not been asked for transit permission for the aircraft.

Furthermore

the Sudan suffered during the past years when its territory was exploited as a passage for arms... the Sudan is most interested in good neighborly relations among all states... {and} believes in Uganda's absolute right to defend its sovereignty, independence and safety of its territory, but we still hope... this will be achieved without recourse to armed conflict in which we might be a party.⁴¹⁰

Reaction from Egypt and Libya was quick and critical, and the incident triggered a renewal of the other elements of Sudanese-Egyptian discord. On September 20, the Sudan liquidated two Egyptian firms for alleged violation of Sudanese law and requested not only the return of some Egyptian teachers in the Sudan, but also the recall of some of the Sudanese troops serving on the Suez Canal.⁴¹¹ Egypt reciprocated by asking the Sudan to withdraw all its troops on the Canal.⁴¹² Although the Sudanese government had declared in recalling the troops that this was only a routine rotation, the dispute escalated sharply. Egyptian press reports accused the Sudan of bowing to American pressure in the decision on the Libyan aircraft and the problems over Cairo University in Khartoum.⁴¹³ Egypt accused Nimeiri

⁴¹⁰ Statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Omdurman Domestic Service, September 20, 1972, cited in FBIS, September 21, 1972, p. T3.

⁴¹¹ Arab Report and Record, September 16-30, 1972.

⁴¹² Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1972.

⁴¹³ Both Al Ahram and Al Goumhurriah refer to "certain pressures," leaving little doubt of their meaning, and Akbar Al Yawm said that American intelligence, led by US charge d'affaires Moore, were behind the Sudan's decisions regarding Cairo University in Khartoum. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, September 23, 1972 (quoting the first two cited), cited in FBIS, September 25, 1972, p. G8; and Middle East News Agency, Cairo, September 30, 1972 (quoting the latter), cited in FBIS, October 2, 1972, p. G4.

of being angry because Egypt had agreed to play host to several "Sudanese personalities who disagree with him", and indeed the theme of the Egyptian government being led to think ill of the Sudanese government because of the alleged machinations of ex-members of the Sudanese government in Cairo was often repeated by Nimeiri and Mansour Khalid during the dispute.⁴¹⁴

A major contention of the Egyptian side, which argued also for the personal dimensions of the dispute, was the charge that a major cause of the decline in relations was the rise of Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid.⁴¹⁵ Insults in the press of both countries continued through October 1972. Particularly painful to the Sudanese leadership were personal comments on Nimeiri himself (such as one Egyptian journalist's description of him as a "highly emotional president") and comments which belittled the role of the Sudan in the Arab-Israeli

⁴¹⁴ Akbar al Yawm, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, September 30, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 2, 1972, pp. G4-9. The best, but by no means the only, other example is Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid's statement in an interview with Fu'ad Matar of An Nahar: "I would simply put our problems with Egypt and Libya as follows: There are Sudanese elements whom the authorities have discarded or expelled. These elements want to attribute their expulsion to political reasons while actually they failed in their task. These elements have begun advocating many things and have found support in the areas where they are doing their talking. Unfortunately, the authorities in Egypt and Libya look at the situation in Sudan through what these elements say." Middle East News Agency, Damascus, to Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 27, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 30, 1972, pp. T5-9. The "elements" to which he referred were former RCC members Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid and Khalid Hassan Abbas, with whom Mansour Khalid himself was on bad terms.

⁴¹⁵ "If Nimeiri's turning away from us began on the day Mansour Khalid suddenly emerged... when the members of the group advocating strong cooperation with Egypt fall and the group represented by Mansour Khalid rises... when we see that our relations, which were good, even excellent in the past, begin to decline upon the emergence of persons like Mansour Khalid, don't we have the right to say what we are saying?" Interview of an unnamed Egyptian

conflict:

The withdrawal of Sudanese troops -- which symbolized Arab unity -- from the fighting front can never affect Arab military mobilization. The Sudanese token units, as is well-known, were from infantry and were assigned to sentry duty. This, naturally, prevented the loss of a single Sudanese life during the war of attrition.⁴¹⁶

By the end of November 1972 Sudanese officials were beginning to refer to the tensions as "misunderstandings" and "passing clouds" and in early December Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid said that the Sudan had taken the initiative to contact the Egyptian Foreign Minister with a view to resolving the tensions.⁴¹⁷ Before the end of December meetings were underway between the two countries, at Sudanese initiative. A few more journalistic snipings took place but by the beginning of January 1973 visits by mid-level officials of the SSU and its Egyptian counterpart had been going on for at least a month.⁴¹⁸ An often-delayed visit by Egyptian Presidential Assistant Sayid Marei in April 1973 put the final touch on the reconciliation which had been in process since December 1972.⁴¹⁹

official "close to Sadat" by Fu'ad Matar, Middle East News Agency, Damascus to Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 28, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 31, 1972, pp. G7-8.

⁴¹⁶ Rose al Yusuf, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 2, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 2, 1972, p. G9.

⁴¹⁷ Al Sayyad, Beirut, December 6, 1972, cited by Middle East News Agency, Damascus, December 6, 1972, cited in FBIS, December 7, 1972, pp. T7-8.

⁴¹⁸ Statement of Sudanese Ambassador to Egypt Mohamed Mirghani, Al Ahram, Cairo, January 13, 1973, cited in FBIS, January 23, 1973, pp. T2-4.

⁴¹⁹ Al Ahram, Cairo, April 21, 1973, cited in FBIS, May 2, 1973, pp. G16-17.

Four types of interrelated factors appear to have been involved: personal, national, bilateral and regional. Personal factors included: (1) the ascendancy of Mansour Khalid and his colleagues at the expense of more pro-Egyptian elements; (2) Nimeiri's personal pique with Sadat over what one close observer called "Sadat's failure to make Nimeiri his confidant, as Nimeiri had expected:"⁴²⁰ (3) resentment at Egypt's arrogance in dealing with the Sudan and Sadat's failure to consult with the Sudanese leadership; (4) the memory of Sadat's lack of understanding of the Sudan's situation at the April 1971 meeting of the Tripoli Charter states; (5) and some lingering resentment of the Egyptian refusal to grant broadcast facilities to RCC member General Khalid Hassan Abbas during the three day coup of July 1971.

On a national level the Sudanese resented Egyptian criticism of the prospect of Sudanese renewal of diplomatic relations with the United States, and the harsh criticism after the restoration of relations had taken place. This factor does not appear to be related to the substance of renewal of relations with the United States per se, but umbrage over Egypt's audacity in criticizing an act which is fundamental to state sovereignty: the nature of diplomatic relations with other countries. As Nimeiri put it in an interview, "If As-Sadat thinks that the Sudan should move at Egypt's beckoning, then he is wrong."⁴²¹ Bilateral factors were the genuine disagreements which had arisen over Cairo University's Khartoum branch and the Egyptian

⁴²⁰ Interview with Ahmad Suleiman.

⁴²¹ Interview of President Nimeiri by Fu'ad Matar, MENA, Damascus to MENA, Cairo, October 25, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 27, 1972, pp. T4-5.

purchase of certain Sudanese commodities.

There were, finally, three regional factors which also appeared to be at work. First, there was still apparently some resentment in Egypt and Libya over the Sudan's failure to join the FAR and the conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord shortly thereafter may have led to them to believe sincerely that the Sudan was turning its back on the Arab world. Furthermore, the conclusion of the accord had required an enormous amount of time and energy on the part of Sudanese officials, both in the negotiations themselves and in the dealings with the neighboring states (particularly Ethiopia) which had to precede the negotiations. Egypt and Libya had been accustomed, during the 1969-1971 period, to being the center of the Sudan's regional focus, and Egypt had had somewhat mercurial relations with Ethiopia's Haile Selassie, who was closely allied with the United States.

The third regional factor was the conflicting demands, for the Sudan, of the Libyan airplanes incident. Libya and Egypt felt that, as the Sudan has just signed a mutual defense agreement with Uganda's Amin in June 1972, the transshipment of arms would be of no consequence to the Sudan, and that it was a matter of Muslim/Arab concern that Amin, who had recently expelled the Israelis from Uganda, not be overthrown. For the Sudan, the incident was more a question of its own national security, which had been seriously damaged in the past by transshipment of arms to its unstable African neighbors and of a desire not to fan the flames of a conflict which could destabilize

⁴²² Nimeiri, as an officer, was unlikely to have forgotten the effect of the infusion of arms to southern Sudanese after the 1965-1965 transitional governments had allowed arms from Egypt to be

the southern Sudan.⁴²²

After the tensions were resolved, bilateral relations were better than at any time since the death of Nasser. In fact, the resolution of the crisis seems to have removed all tensions, to the extent that President Nimeiri, who only seven months before had complained bitterly of Sadat's highhandedness, said in May 1973:

What binds Sudan to Egypt and ... Egypt to Sudan cannot be found between any other two Arab states. Storms are transient. Only deep-rooted positions remain. President Anwar As-Sadat is the big brother.⁴²³

At the end of May 1973, at the OAU summit in Addis Ababa, the two heads of state met in Nimeiri's suite for several hours and Nimeiri emerged from the meeting saying that they had agreed on means to develop relations and remove "previous obstacles which had led to some cool relations between the two fraternal countries."⁴²⁴ Throughout the remainder of 1973 relations between the Sudan and Egypt were excellent. Visits by party delegations resulted in a program for cooperation between the Arab Socialist Union of Egypt and the SSU, as well as between the two nations' media personnel, farmers' organizations and other groups.

Bilateral relations after the October 1973 war became even closer. A Sudanese military delegation visited Cairo in January 1974 to congratulate their Egyptian colleagues and on February 11, 1974 President Nimeiri arrived in Cairo with a large delegation for his

transshipped to Congolese rebels.

⁴²³ Interview of President Nimeiri by Musa Sabri of Al Akbar, MENA, Cairo, May 20, 1973, cited in FBIS, May 21, 1973, p. T8.

⁴²⁴ SUNA, May 26, 1973, cited in FBIS, May 29, 1973, p. T5.

first visit to the Egyptian capital since the tensions of 1972. The purpose of the visit was to congratulate Sadat on the first disengagement agreement, which had already been attacked by some Arab states. Nimeiri praised Sadat

who moved Egypt and the Arab nation from a deadlocked arena to an arena pulsating with movement by means of a valiant decision, triumphant fighting and wise movement which will achieve victory soon, God willing...⁴²⁵

At this point President Nimeiri's comments on the disengagement agreement were still carefully within what might be considered an Arab mainstream position. Only a few days after his first statement in Egypt, he said that war in the Middle East would resume if the aim of the talks for a peaceful solution was only disengagement of forces or if the situation were frozen at that point.⁴²⁶ He pointed out the importance of Syrian, Jordanian and Palestinian participation and the critical question of Jerusalem which must, he said, remain Arab.⁴²⁷

Another outcome of Nimeiri's February 1974 visit to Egypt was the agreement on a program of "political action and economic integration" signed by Sadat and Nimeiri in Alexandria on February 12, 1974.⁴²⁸ The agreement differed significantly from the Tripoli Charter in that it embodied the Sudanese concept of integration short of union, a method which by now Sadat himself appeared to favor, notwithstanding the continued existence in a technical sense of the FAR including Egypt,

⁴²⁵ MENA, Cairo, February 11, 1974, cited in FBIS, February 12, 1974, p. G1.

⁴²⁶ MENA, Damascus to MENA, Cairo, February 14, 1974, cited in FBIS, February 15, 1974, p. 14.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Cairo Domestic Service, February 12, 1974, cited in FBIS, February 13, 1974, pp. G4-5.

Libya and Syria. The 1974 Sudanese-Egyptian integration agreement was designed only to be "step on the road of rational unionist action", to

strengthen and develop links... in all the political, economic, cultural, and military fields by setting up establishments that will guarantee the continuation of cooperation, manifest interaction and turn it into a philosophy and a program of work detached from improvisation and emotionalism.⁴²⁹

The agreement called for regular meetings of the two presidents at least once a year, as well as periodic meetings of a higher ministerial committee, subcommittees on specific subjects and a higher political committee drawn from the two countries' single party organizations. As far as the Sudan was concerned, the "Tripoli Charter no longer exists."⁴³⁰ President Nimeiri remarked in April 1974

the Tripoli Charter is finished despite the fact that its principles were noble... we are now pursuing the same theory on which the Tripoli Charter was based.⁴³¹

Despite Nimeiri's comparison with the principles of the Tripoli Charter, the February 1974 integration agreement with Egypt differed in two important ways: it was clearly not designed to lead to political union at any time in the foreseeable future and Libya was not included.

Throughout 1974 meetings were held of the various organs set up in the integration agreement, but the only notable achievement was the decision in August 1974 to implement the joint Sudanese-Egyptian Jonglei project, a canal in the southern Sudan which would greatly

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Al Usbu' al Arabi, cited by MENA, Damascus to MENA, Cairo, cited in FBIS, March 27, 1974, p. 13.

⁴³¹ Al Anwar, Beirut, April 1, 1974, cited in FBIS, April 10, 1974, pp. 14-8.

increase the flow of the water from the White Nile by bypassing the Sudd swamp. If the Sudanese government had not already been aware of the constraints on integration with Egypt imposed by the settlement of the southern Sudan conflict, they were certainly reminded of it in October 1974 when riots erupted in Juba over rumors that Egyptians were to be settled in lands to be drained by the new canal.⁴³² It is ironic that the integration agreement of 1974, which was designed to eschew political union in favor of substantive economic and social integration, resulted in virtually no substantive integration, but was important more for its political value, symbolizing the relationship between Egypt and the Sudan.

As 1975 went on Sudanese support for Egypt's position in the Arab-Israeli conflict became increasingly clear, as did the opposition to Egyptian policy by the Rejection Front. One way of dealing with Arab opposition to Egypt's stance, and a manifestation of the Sudan's attempt to maintain good relations both with Egypt and with Egypt's Arab critics, was a change in the Sudan's projection of its own role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Sudan took the tack of leaving the methods of achieving Arab aims to the "confrontation states," of which it no longer considered itself a member. In February 1975 Nimeiri replied to a question whether he supported the stage-by-stage solution or resumption of the Geneva conference by saying

My interest in the stage by stage solution, or the Geneva Conference, or even in the launching of an all-put war of liberation (our forces... are still deployed on the canal front) goes only as far as any of them can achieve the strategies I have just explained. In this respect we leave

⁴³² Two people were killed in the rioting and hundreds injured. A state of emergency was declared in Juba. Arab Report and Record, October 16-31, 1974.

it to the frontline states to make the necessary tactical decisions.⁴³³

The tacit rebuke to such critics of Egypt as Libya, states which had little to lose materially in confrontation with Israel, would become more explicit in later statements.

President Nimeiri praised the re-opening of the Suez Canal in June 1975 and in response to a question about the efforts of the Rejection Front said, "I have never heard about it nor sensed a trace of its movements. Therefore it is impossible to comment on it."⁴³⁴ As visits between Egyptian and Sudanese officials at all levels continued through the year, Nimeiri became more explicit in his support of Sadat:

We support a political settlement and the policy of Egypt. We supported Egypt when the US Secretary of State came to the Middle East for the first time and succeeded in working out the disengagement of troops. We also supported Egypt when the Secretary came back and his efforts failed to achieve an interim settlement.⁴³⁵

In the same interview Nimeiri dismissed the Rejection Front as "insignificant" but was careful to add that the Sudan's backing for Egypt's policy of peaceful settlement did not signify that the Sudan ignored other means: Sudanese troops were still stationed on the Canal and the Arab states, he said, continued to prepare economically and militarily.⁴³⁶

⁴³³ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Anwar, February 13, 1975, cited in FBIS, February 20, 1975, p. 110.

⁴³⁴ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Anwar, Beirut, June 30, 1974, cited in FBIS, July 9, 1975, pp. 12-4.

⁴³⁵ Interview of President Nimeiri, Daily Star, Beirut, August 20, 1975, cited in FBIS, August 21, 1975, p. 12.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

Despite the domestic uproar over the attempted coup against the Sudanese government on September 5, 1975, four days after the signing of the Sinai II agreement, and despite denunciation of the agreement by the PLO and some of the Arab states, Nimeiri was not slow in proclaiming Sudanese support of Sinai II. On September 7 he referred to the "mudslinging" in the Arab world as resulting from a "shallow grasp of the agreement" and a

superficial view that does not examine the depth of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Taking a long-term view, detached from passing emotionalism and the calculated war of words, the Sinai disengagement agreement can be seen as a strategic Arab victory and not a tactical one.⁴³⁷

Within a few weeks, despite strong denunciation of Sinai II by some Arab states, Nimeiri reiterated his support of the agreement and criticized its opponents in the Arab world for basing their opposition on hypothetical information.⁴³⁸ He denied that the agreement deviated from the Rabat summit resolutions.

The line of policy that left "tactical" decisions to the frontline states proved to be a very useful implicit criticism of the Arab critics of Sinai II, as well as a means of continuing the Sudan's two-tiered policy of differentiating between support of Egypt on a multilateral basis while maintaining strong bilateral ties even with the strongest critics of Sadat's policies. In a November 1975 interview, in reply to a question on Sinai II Nimeiri said

Our position is clear. We support Egypt's viewpoint. It was Egypt who fought and shed their blood in Sinai, and it is their territory which is involved. We're not going to

⁴³⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, September 7, 1975, cited in FBIS, September 10, 1975, pp. 17-8.

⁴³⁸ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Siyasa, Kuwait, cited by MENA, Cairo, October 16, 1975, cited in FBIS, October 17, 1975, p. 14.

give them lessons on how they should recover it.⁴³⁹

As relations between Egypt and its Arab critics continued to deteriorate, it became clear that the Sudan was ready to cooperate with Egypt on all matters concerning the peace negotiations. Foreign Minister Jemal Mohamed Ahmad went to Cairo in January 1976 to "discuss developments in the Middle East in light of the coming Egyptian drive for the convocation of the Geneva Conference."⁴⁴⁰ He remarked that Egypt and the Sudan had "identical views" on current problems and the regional situation.⁴⁴¹

Although the integration agreement of February 1974 had shown little, if any, results by the end of the 1971-1976 period, relations between the Sudan and Egypt were very close. Visits of delegations, including military groups concerned with military coordination and cooperation, continued and Egypt appeared to be filling the gap left by the faltering of Soviet military assistance.⁴⁴² In May 1976 for the first time Sudanese citizens were admitted to Egypt without entry visas, a symbol of the integration for which both nations expressed great hope.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁹ Interview of President Nimeiri, Le Monde, Paris, November 15, 1975, cited in FBIS, November 25, 1975, pp. 14-6.

⁴⁴⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 16, 1976, cited in FBIS, January 20, 1976, p. D9.

⁴⁴¹ MENA, Cairo, January 28, 1976, cited in FBIS, January 30, 1976, p. D1.

⁴⁴² Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁴⁴³ MENA, Cairo, May 13, 1976, cited in FBIS, May 14, 1976, p. D2.

Although the political cost for the Sudan of support for Sadat's policies in the Arab world was not yet high, it was only for Egypt that the Sudan had been willing to go against its own successful policy of not taking sides in inter-Arab disagreements where there was no consensus. This period of Sudanese-Egyptian relations saw a very high level of friendship and cooperation, but in the following period the relationship would reach an unprecedented level of intensity, with Egypt perceived in Khartoum as an integral part of regime security for Nimeiri.

Libya

Sudanese relations with Libya in both post-1971 periods changed more often and more dramatically than relations with any other nation. As in the relationship with Egypt, a web of personal, bilateral and regional factors were at the root of the mercurial relationship. While relations were good in the months immediately following the coup attempt of 1971, some factors related to the coup may have been involved in later disputes.

Libya offered the Sudanese government significant assistance during the counter-coup of July 1971: Defense Minister Gen. Khalid Hassan Abbas was given facilities to broadcast to Sudanese troops in the Sudan and Libya forced down a BOAC jet, removed from it two leaders of the coup government, and returned them to the Sudan after Nimeiri and his colleagues had regained power. A condition of the release of the two may have been that they not be executed. In any case Qadafi cabled Nimeiri before their execution asking that at least one of them

*** Interview with a member of the RCC who handed Nimeiri the cable

be spared.⁴⁴⁴ Both were executed and Qadafi may well have been angered personally over being put in the position of having captured the two men in contravention of international law and practice and handed them over to be executed.

A number of observers intimately involved in relations with Libya believe that the major factor in the deterioration in relations in 1972 was Libya's reaction to the Sudan's withdrawal from the FAR in April 1971.⁴⁴⁵ Although Libya did not chide the Sudan publicly at that time, it did not cease to urge the Sudan to join and subsequent events, such as the conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord in February 1972 and the change of decision-making personnel in the Sudanese government, surely aggravated Qadafi's impatience for Sudanese assent to the union. Libya shared with Egypt concern over the impact of the Addis Ababa accord, and was equally apprehensive over the accession to power of Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid and his colleagues at the expense of more pro-Arab figures, such as former RCC member Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid, the closest of the RCC members to the Libyan leadership. Despite these possible reservations on Libya's part, the relationship between the two nations remained outwardly friendly in the months immediately following the 1971 coup attempt. The second anniversary of the September 1969 Libyan coup d'etat was celebrated in the Sudan and there were still reference made in the Sudan to ultimate accession to the FAR. But the Libyan leadership did not let up pressure on Khartoum to join the FAR:

from Qadafi during a press conference. Nimeiri crossed out he message and continued speaking.

⁴⁴⁵ Interview with members of the RCC.

Just as credit will be due to you for launching the Tripoli Charter, so credit will also be due to you for increasing the might of this federation when the 1972 witnesses... Sudan's adherence.⁴⁴⁶

While Libya praised the Addis Ababa accord, Qadafi had tried continuously to interfere in the delicate negotiations.⁴⁴⁷ Libyan praise of the agreement was coupled, however, with further pressure on the Sudan to join the union:

While we bless this new step fraternal Sudan has taken, we have great hopes that the Sudan will now direct all its efforts to achieving the Sudanese Arab people's aims of freedom, socialism and unity and will hasten to join the Confederation of Arab Republics... We do not doubt at all that Sudan will take this step now that it has overcome its biggest problem.⁴⁴⁸

The Libyan leadership clearly did not understand that the conclusion and maintenance of peace in southern Sudan required the reassurance of the non-Arab Sudanese, and that the resolution of the civil war was a priority that came well before Sudanese aspirations for Arab unity. In May 1972 the Libyan newspaper Al Balagh denounced statements by former Anya nya commander Joseph Lagu and other southern Sudanese that four million southerners opposed the Sudan joining the federation: it called Lagu an agent of imperialism whose statements confirmed his previous attitude against Arabism.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁶ Qadafi message to Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, January 5, 1972, cited in FBIS, January 6, 1972, p. T8.

⁴⁴⁷ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

⁴⁴⁸ Tripoli Domestic Service, March 4, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 6, 1972, p. T14.

⁴⁴⁹ Al Balagh, cited by Libyan News Agency, Tripoli, May 11, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 12, 1972, p. T1.

While there had been as yet no clear signs of poor relations, there must have been some private coolness. Libya was pressing the Sudan for repayment of a \$7 million loan, and during a speech in 1974, during a period of very poor relations between the Sudan and Libya, Nimeiri recalled Qadafi's unannounced arrival for the third anniversary of the "May Revolution" in May 1972:

You will recall that after a lukewarm period Qadafi suddenly visited the country without prior notice on the third anniversary of the Revolution... ostensibly to participate in our celebration... but actually to stand here among you and incite the Sudanese people to sedition and to instigate them against their leadership... {Qadafi spoke for hours}... these were long and bitter hours... the most embarrassing, bitter and tortuous hours that I have ever experienced... {referring to Libyan-Sudanese differences on the question of unity} these were the roots of the disagreement between us and the authority in Libya.⁴⁵⁰

Despite the "tortuous hours" President Nimeiri attended the annual celebration in Libya of the American evacuation of Wheelus Air Force Base in mid-June 1972. By this time relations between Egypt and the Sudan were in eclipse, but the links between the Sudan and Libya remained outwardly friendly. Although Libya may have shared Egypt's reaction to the announcement that Nimeiri was considering renewing diplomatic relations with the United States, there was no public reaction from Libya, and relations appeared to remain friendly. During an apparent shake-up in the Libyan RCC, Sudanese Minister of Health and former RCC member Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim went to Libya with a personal message from Nimeiri to Qadafi and informed him that the Sudan would train Sudanese youth who volunteered in response

⁴⁵⁰ Monthly radio address by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, June 10, 1974, cited in FBIS, June 12, 1974, pp. 19-15.

⁴⁵¹ MENA, Cairo, July 16, 1972, cited in FBIS, July 18, 1972, p. T8.

to Qadafi's call for pan-Arab fedayeen action.⁴⁵¹ He was also reported to have told Qadafi that the Sudan would hold a mass referendum on the FAR upon completion of its constitutional construction, an idea which had been expressed at the time of the Sudan's withdrawal from the FAR, and not often since that time.⁴⁵²

Although the roots of Sudanese-Libyan discord lay in the past, the trigger for the downturn in relations was the September 20, 1972 dispatch, via Sudan, of Libyan aircraft, troops and arms to aid Idi Amin against Tanzania, and the Sudanese reaction to this. The Sudan's policy was based on notions of national sovereignty and security and not on the regional and ideological concerns which apparently prompted Libyan action. The actions of each side appeared to confirm the other's worst fears: Libya's insouciant disregard for the Sudan's security problems in the south must have been as worrisome to the Sudanese as was the Sudan's apparent retreat from Arab solidarity and unwillingness to support fellow-Muslim (and now anti-Israeli) Amin was to Libya.

A statement issued on September 20, 1972 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Khartoum laid out the Sudan's position:

At 1410 today an unidentified plane contacted Khartoum airport tower. The pilot said he was on his way from Cairo to Entebbe. Since there was no permission for this plane to enter Sudanese airspace, the plan was either to turn back or to land... The planes began landing at Khartoum, five large... planes of the Libyan Air Force carrying twenty-two officers, 377 other ranks, ammunition, other war equipment and weapons... The Sudanese government has ordered that the arms and equipment be impounded and Libyan officers and men spend the night in barracks and return home tomorrow. The Sudanese government has informed the Arab League and the OAU of this action, which stems from the Sudanese government's

⁴⁵² ibid.

absolute sovereignty over its territory. The Sudanese government deplores that this concentration should take place in its airspace without notifying it and without permission being asked from it by Cairo, Libya or Uganda... The Sudan has suffered during the past years when its territories were exploited as a passage for arms... the damage has been removed only recently when a peaceful solution for the problem of the south was reached... Revolutionary Sudan is most interested in preserving good neighborly relations among its neighbors. The Sudan believes in Uganda's absolute right to defend its sovereignty, independence and safety of its territory, but we still hope... this will be achieved without recourse to armed conflict in which we might be a party...⁴⁵³

Qadafi's reaction was far more negative than the Egyptian response, which was manifested primarily in the Egyptian press. On the day following the incident he sent Nimeiri a short telegram: "May God forgive you."⁴⁵⁴ The next day it was reported that the commander of the Libyan troops on the aircraft had thanked the Sudanese army for preventing their mistreatment, apparently meaning at the hands of the Sudanese government.⁴⁵⁵

At the same moment that Sudanese-Egyptian relations were reaching a new low with the reported withdrawal of Sudanese troops along the Canal, the government press in Libya was blasting Nimeiri's decision on the airplanes. The Libyan News Agency condemned Nimeiri's actions as "traitorous," saying that he had disavowed his nation, had bitten the hand which had snatched him from death, and had thrown himself

⁴⁵³ Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Omdurman Domestic Service, September 20, 1972, cited in FBIS, September, 21, 1972, p. T3.

⁴⁵⁴ Tripoli Domestic Service, September 21, 1972, cited in FBIS, September 22, 1972, p. T1.

⁴⁵⁵ MENA, Cairo, September 22, 1972, cited in FBIS, September 25, 1972, p. T1.

⁴⁵⁶ Libyan News Agency, Tripoli, September 24, 1972, cited in FBIS,

into the lap of British and American imperialism.⁴⁵⁶ It concluded that the downfall of Nimeiri was "on the road to progress."⁴⁵⁷ The Libyan press emphasized what they regarded as Libya's major role in the counter-coup of July 1971 -- a clear affront to the Sudanese government which was wont to consider the success of the counter-coup an expression of popular support.

Like the Egyptians, the Libyan government regarded the Sudan's policy in this matter as a move by Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, whom they branded an American agent, and Qadafi was quick to note any inconsistency in the Sudanese reaction:

There must be an imperialist hand in the Sudanese government... Sudan's excuse has been: we do not want armed conflict in Africa... This is rejected because Sudan had officially asked us to give it arms and ammunition in order to arm the very gangs which came from Tanzania. It wanted to arm them when Obote was in Sudan. When the communists ruled Sudan, {Foreign Minister} Farouk Abu Isa brought Obote secretly... to Sudan. They told him: we will provide you with armed gangs to attack Uganda... There are agents in Sudan... we reject them and will never meet with them... we know their activities... They are US agents, members of the CIA. They have {government} posts in the Sudan...⁴⁵⁸

In the same speech Qadafi pointed out that the Sudan could have handled the matter differently, in a friendly way, without taking the matter to international civil aviation authorities. He claimed that, as the Sudan had in the past June signed a mutual defense agreement with Uganda, the admittedly late notice by Libya should not have induced the Sudan to make such an uproar.⁴⁵⁹

September 25, 1972, p. T1.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Tripoli Domestic Service, October 7, 1972, cited in FBIS supplement, October 12, 1972.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

It does appear that the Sudan's reaction to the incident was more vehement than one might expect in a relationship between apparently friendly countries. But in fact the Sudanese-Libyan relations were more strained at this time than they appeared on the surface and fundamental policy concerns of sovereignty and security were paramount for the Sudan, particularly as the incident occurred only eight months after the long-sought resolution of the southern Sudan conflict. The Sudanese side was tired of Qadafi's constant pressure on the question of unity, annoyed by his unannounced visit in May 1972 and his lengthy exhortations on that occasion, resentful of his attempts to interfere in the Addis Ababa negotiations and of his "quarrelsomeness on all sort of minor issues."⁴⁶⁰ The Sudanese was understandably touchy about the shipment of arms to unstable countries bordering the southern Sudan. Nimeiri had served in the south and no one in the Sudanese army had forgotten the infusion of arms to southern fighters which had resulted from the 1964-65 transitional governments' policy of allowing arms to be shipped from Egypt and other countries to the Congolese rebels. There was nothing more important to Nimeiri and the Sudanese government than the Addis Ababa accord and the last thing they wanted was an infusion of arms to fan the flames of conflict between Uganda and Tanzania which could spill over into recently stabilized southern Sudan.

Normal security concerns were also an issue. Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid declared that arms transshipments to Eritrea and Chad had occurred in the past, causing the Sudan great problems with its

⁴⁶⁰ Interview with Jemal Mohamed Ahmad.

neighbors and resulting in the death of Sudanese citizens.⁴⁶¹ The position of the Sudan had a certain disingenuous element, because the government had in the past (and would again in the future) supply arms or allow transshipments to dissident elements in neighboring countries. But the already faltering relationships with Libya and Egypt at this time, the recent success of the Addis Ababa accord, and legitimate concerns for national sovereignty and security made the Sudanese policy an understandable one. Libya was ready to overreact as well. Libyan relations with Egypt were thriving while Egyptian-Sudanese relations were already at a somewhat low ebb, and Qadafi was clearly beginning to realize that the likelihood of the Sudan joining the FAR was very slim.

While the nadir of relations with Egypt and Libya occurred more or less at the same time and were finally triggered by the same incident, the rapprochements between the Sudan and its two neighbors could not have been more different, both in the short and the long term, for a number of reasons. Foremost, of course, was the fact that the historic and personal relationship between Egypt and the Sudan was wholly different from the relationship with Libya. As President Nimeiri pointed out, "Our relations with Egypt are historical but our relations with Libya are new."⁴⁶² A second factor was that, just as relations between Egypt and the Sudan began to improve, relations between Egypt and Libya began to disintegrate, so that the rapprochement with Egypt undoubtedly delayed rapprochement with Libya.

⁴⁶¹ Interview of the Foreign Minister, Ar Ra'y al Amm, Kuwait, October 19, 1972, cited in FBIS, November 15, 1972, pp. T5-7.

⁴⁶² Interview of President Nimeiri by Fu'ad Matar, October 27, 1972, op. cit.

Although there were more issues in contention between Egypt and the Sudan than between Libya and the Sudan, the rift with the former was over by the beginning of 1973 while poor relations with Libya lasted until mid-1974.

As relations between Egypt and the Sudan began once again to flourish in 1973, relations between the Sudan and Libya remained stagnant and relations between Egypt and Libya began to deteriorate over Qadafi's insistence on immediate union and his criticism of continuing Egyptian relations with the Soviet Union. Although Libya apparently granted the Sudan a loan of seven million Sudanese pounds sometime during the last months of 1972, the Sudanese government was disturbed over Libya's attitude about the loan:

We are grateful for this but {for Libya} to continue talking about it every day must inevitably leave a bad impression.⁴⁶³

There were some contacts between Libyan and Sudanese officials during this period, such as the visit of the Libyan Foreign Minister in Khartoum in February 1973, along with the Egyptian Foreign Minister on the way to the Addis Ababa OAU meeting, but as Qadafi described the relationship in April 1973, "there is nothing between us and Sudan. Zero. Neither positive nor negative."⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶³ Statement by Minister of Culture and Information Omer al Haj Moussa, MENA, Damascus to MENA, Cairo, November 28, 1972 in FBIS, November 30, 1972, p. T5.

⁴⁶⁴ Interview with Qadafi in Al Majalis, Kuwait, cited by Tripoli Domestic Service, April 14, 1973, cited in FBIS, April 16, 1973, p. Ti-12.

Until August 1974 the relationship remained poor, a period which coincided not only with worsening relations between Libya and Egypt, but also some internal changes in Libya. The mildest expression of Sudanese policy was voiced by former RCC member and Minister of Health Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, who said that the Sudan's relations with Libya "could be considered to be passing through a stage of lack of understanding, but this could still be overcome."⁴⁶⁵

The October 1973 war did not appear to materially affect Sudanese policy toward Libya, although in March 1974 President Nimeiri referred cryptically to Qadafi's "strange cables" during the conflict.⁴⁶⁶ By January 1974 relations had worsened, with the Libyan press highlighting the domestic violence in the Sudan. Following Libya's short-lived merger with Tunisia and the conclusion of the first Egypt-Israeli disengagement agreement, the distance between the Sudan and Libya became greater, as did the rift between Qadafi and Sadat. Nimeiri's response to continuing Libyan press criticism of the Sudan was cool:

During the first months of the Revolution, implementation of the project for integration between the two countries {Sudan and Egypt} was scheduled to start but Libyan outbidding and ambition made immediate constitutional unity the only road to the realization of integration. Thus, the program for integration set in force by the Revolutionary Council stopped before it had even started ... {referring to Libyan press criticism} I have always rejected and will always reject such methods because Libya, despite all that has happened and is happening, is part of the comprehensive Arab entity to which we belong... what the Libyan media are doing degrades them, rather than constituting an attack on the Sudan.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ Press Conference of Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, MENA, Damascus, June 24, 1973, cited in FBIS, June 26, 1973, p. T6.

⁴⁶⁶ Monthly radio address by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, March 11, 1974, cited in FBIS, March 12, 1974, pp. T1-6.

But the Libyan press campaign was beginning to get to Nimeiri, who continued to criticize Libya for it, for financing dissident Sudanese efforts to infiltrate the Sudan and work against the regime from Beirut.⁴⁶⁸ The Sudanese press began to respond to the attacks.

As the program of integration with Egypt presumably got underway, the statements by Nimeiri about the demise of the Tripoli Charter may also have been aimed at Libya. By April and May 1974 all factors pointed to a negative policy toward Libya: Libyan-Egyptian relations were in a very serious state with Egypt accusing Libya of being involved in conspiracies, continuing Libyan aid to dissident Sudanese, and Libyan pressure on the Sudan to repay its 1972 loan.⁴⁶⁹ In May 1974 Nimeiri accused the Libyans of hatching a plot to overthrow the Sudanese government similar to the "military college conspiracy" in Egypt.⁴⁷⁰

At the beginning of July 1974 Qadafi took the initiative to restore harmony to bilateral relations, but the Sudanese reaction was cool at first. Nimeiri responded saying

The hostile actions against the Sudan and its Revolution are continuing and even intensifying inside and outside Libya... Sudan received information from sources in Tripoli which are close to Libyan authorities on hostile actions against Sudan...⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁷ SUNA, March 9, 1974, cited in FBIS, March 11, 1974, pp. T7-8.

⁴⁶⁸ Monthly radio address by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, March 11, 1974, cited in FBIS, March 12, 1974, pp. T1-6.

⁴⁶⁹ Interview with President Nimeiri, Al Hayah, Beirut, May 4, 1974, cited in FBIS, May 10, 1974, p. 13.

⁴⁷⁰ Interview of President Nimeiri by the Associated Press, cited by Omdurman Domestic Service, May 12, 1974, cited in FBIS, May 13, 1974, p. 15.

He added that Qadafi had asked for restoration of good relations, but that he had answered that a mere announcement of goodwill was not sufficient and that deporting certain Sudanese elements from Libya would help improve relations. The President concluded on a more conciliatory note:

I am prepared to receive any Libyan official at the highest level here in Khartoum to discuss the best means for restoring normal relations between the two fraternal countries.⁴⁷²

A visit from the Libyan Minister of Labor at the end of July 1974 set the stage for resumption of more or less friendly relations, though there was clearly no question of resuming the kind of close relations which had existed in 1969/1970. In mid-August President Nimeiri confirmed that a Libyan representative had met with him and a few days later he accepted the credentials of a new Libyan ambassador, saying that it was time for the "summer clouds" to dissolve.⁴⁷³ He entrusted the new Ambassador with assurance of his affection and highest esteem for his "dear brother" Qadafi and the rest of the Libyan RCC.⁴⁷⁴

The period from August 1974 until September 1975 was one of "normal" relations between Libya and the Sudan, but the relationship was fundamentally shaky, with lingering mistrust of Qadafi at the

⁴⁷¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, July 7, 1974, cited in FBIS, July 8, 1974, pp. 17-8.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Monthly radio address by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, August 13, 1974, cited in FBIS, August 16, 1974, pp. 13-6. Omdurman Domestic Service, August 24, 1974, cited in FBIS, August 27, 1974, p. 13.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ "Relations with Iraq and Libya are normal like the Sudan's

highest levels in Khartoum.⁴⁷⁵ In March 1975 Qadafi and a large delegation came to the Sudan for "national unity day" celebrating the anniversary of the Addis Ababa accord. The two heads of state called for Arab unity, the implementation of the Tripoli Charter, and study of possible integration of adjacent areas of southeastern Libya and northwestern Sudan.⁴⁷⁶ But this visit was a detriment to improved relations in an important but unpublicized way. His Sudanese hosts found Qadafi's behavior appalling. "He was rude, late for appointments, lecturing everyone."⁴⁷⁷ The talk of unity at the time was not sincere, but only a smokescreen.⁴⁷⁸ Sudanese attempts to reconcile Libya and Egypt, mentioned some months earlier, "just petered out," and relations between Egypt and Libya remained poor.⁴⁷⁹ It was during this period that Nimeiri made his statements on the insignificance of the Rejection Front, and his continued support of Sadat on the multilateral level may have been another irritant to Qadafi, though nothing was said of it publicly at this time.

One event and several factors came together in the fall of 1975 to bring Libya-Sudanese relations back to a low level. While President Nimeiri did not accuse Col. Qadafi of direct involvement in the September 1975 coup attempt in the Sudan, he criticized Libya's harboring such Sudanese opposition members as Philip Ghaboush and

relations with the other fraternal Arab states." Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Bayraq, Beirut, November 14, 1974, cited in FBIS, December 6, 1974, pp. 15-7.

⁴⁷⁶ Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1975.

⁴⁷⁷ Interview with Jemal Mohamed Ahmad.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

Sherif Hussein al Hindi:

I do not believe necessity demands that your capital accomodate them after their traitorous aims have been exposed with evidence... Brother {Qadafi}... I tell you... without making any accusations and without any doubt, we have differences in our ideologies for some time. You wanted a reconciliation in solidarity, although each of us would retain his ideology and program... We accepted the reconciliation and we transcended it to the limit of cooperation, indeed of integration... you certainly would not agree, nor would I agree, that Khartoum should be the headquarters of conspirators. Likewise I do not think from now on you will agree to Tripoli being a retreat for conspiracy against the Sudan.⁴⁸⁰

Other factors were also involved in the resurgent coolness between the two nations. Relations between Egypt and the Sudan were very strong, while relations between Libya and Egypt continued to worsen after the conclusion of Sinai II in September 1975. The Sudan supported Egypt unambiguously and Libya was a leader of the Rejection Front. At the same time that relations between the Sudan and the US were becoming slowly closer, relations between Libya and the USSR were warming considerably following the May 1975 Libyan-Soviet agreement. If these factors were not sufficient to guarantee a downturn in Sudanese-Libyan relations, it was also in the beginning of September 1975 that Libya annexed the northern Aouzou section of Chad. Nothing was said about this in public by the Sudan, but there must have been some concern in Khartoum about Libyan intentions toward the Sudan's unstable Western neighbor.

Until the end of the 1971-1976 period, Sudanese policy toward Libya remained very quiet. Exchanges of high-level delegations ceased almost entirely, with the exception of visits by former RCC member,

⁴⁸⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, September 9, 1975, cited in FBIS, September 10, 1975, pp. 12-4.

now Presidential Advisor Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid. It was after the July 1976 coup/invasion that relations between the Sudan and Libya would explode into overt hostility.

Saudi Arabia and the Arab States of the Gulf

In keeping with traditional Saudi reluctance to maintain a high profile in Arab politics in general, the burgeoning Sudanese-Saudi relationship in 1971-1976 was not much in the public eye. Nonetheless it followed a clear pattern of improvement, starting only a few months after the abortive 1971 coup and culminating in talk of an "unannounced and unwritten integration" in 1976.

There were two major dimensions to the Sudanese policy of rapprochement with the Saudis. The Sudan had been reluctant, even during the radical 1969-1971 period, to criticize the Saudis too harshly because of their wealth and weight in the Arab world. With the turn to a policy geared to economic development and the wave of anti-communism internally after July 1971, the time was clearly ripe to seek improved relations with Saudi Arabia both as a means of obtaining greater development assistance and as a way of making sure that the Saudis would not continue their relationship with the Ansar opposition within the Sudan.⁴⁸¹ Moving closer to the Saudis also coincided with the growing rapprochement with the West, and may also have been encouraged by the good relations between Egypt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Saudi position of maintaining good relations with Egypt and the other Arab states despite inter-Arab quarrels was one which the Sudan sought to emulate, despite not being

⁴⁸¹ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

endowed with the resource-rich status of the Saudis.

Even before the end of 1971 closer relations with Saudi Arabia were in the making. Saudi Arabia showed its sympathy over the 1971 coup attempt with a gift of 50,000 Sudanese pounds for the families of those killed in the coup.⁴⁸² Before the end of the year the Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs had visited Khartoum and President Nimeiri had visited the Kingdom and agreed with King Faisal on an expansion of commercial and cultural relations.⁴⁸³ During 1972 there were visits exchanged and indications of Saudi interest in business investment in the Sudan, but the big upsurge in Sudanese-Saudi relations came in January 1974 when President Nimeiri proclaimed that discussions between him and King Faisal had resulted in an "understanding and... agreement."⁴⁸⁴ He said that the Sudan and Saudi Arabia were following the same policy line. There were further indications of increased bilateral ties in the same month. It was announced that Saudi Arabia was giving the Sudan a \$200 million loan in cash to finance development projects and that the Saudis would supply the Sudan with its petroleum needs, estimated at about six million tons of crude oil, for the following year.⁴⁸⁵ High level visits continued and by the end of 1974 Nimeiri had declared

⁴⁸² Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1971.

⁴⁸³ Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 16-30, 1971 and December 1-15, 1971.

⁴⁸⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 10, 1974, cited in FBIS, January 11, 1974, p. T5.

⁴⁸⁵ Iraqi News Agency, January 31, 1974, cited in FBIS, January 31, 1974, p.

relations with Saudi Arabia are special relations that have taken the form of an economic integration that has been neither announced nor written.⁴⁸⁶

Little evidence of this had been seen other than the Saudi loan and a May 1974 agreement for joint exploration of Red Sea resources.⁴⁸⁷ In February 1976 Nimeiri remarked

The warm fraternal relations which bind Sudan and Saudi Arabia move daily from strength to strength... We are proceeding with Saudi Arabia along the road of comprehensive economic integration... the announced and unannounced visits... between Sudanese officials and their Saudi counterparts, in addition to contacts and consultation in all areas between me and brother His Majesty King Khalid and Prince Fahd...⁴⁸⁸

In March 1976 Nimeiri defended the Saudis against charges of economic pressure and on the question of Arab solidarity said

The Saudi stand is the same as the Sudanese stand. Despite its extremely good intentions to achieve Arab solidarity and to repudiate Arab disputes... Saudi Arabia moves cautiously and delicately because some Arab leaders do not take the advice and efforts seriously. I declare for the record that despite the efforts it is exerting, Saudi Arabia has not used economic pressure against any Arab state, as some people do...⁴⁸⁹

The upswing in relations with the Saudis had begun to accelerate in early 1974, shortly before the agreement on Egyptian-Sudanese integration in February 1974. It was clear by 1976 that the two trends were connected to some degree, but the exact nature of the relationship was not clarified. Sadat referred in June 1976 to

⁴⁸⁶ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Bayraq, Beirut, November 14, 1974, cited in FBIS, December 16, 1974, p. 15.

⁴⁸⁷ Arab Report and Record, May 16-31, 1974.

⁴⁸⁸ Monthly radio address by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, February 10, 1976, cited in FBIS, February 12, 1976, pp. 15-7.

⁴⁸⁹ MENA, Cairo, March 18, 1976, cited in FBIS, March 19, 1976, pp. 13-4.

"tripartite integration of Sudan-Egypt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," as did Nimeiri, who mentioned "Saudi-Egyptian-Sudanese integration" which he hoped would be discussed at a July 1976 meeting between him and Sadat, which might also be attended by Saudi officials.⁴⁹⁰

Sudanese policy toward the Gulf states more or less followed its policy toward Saudi Arabia: an attempt to move closer to them primarily to obtain development aid, but also as a part of its effort to consolidate good bilateral relations with all Arab states.⁴⁹¹ Relations with the new United Arab Emirates (UAE) were particularly strong. The Sudan was reportedly the first nation to recognize and establish diplomatic relations with the new union and Nimeiri's visit to the Emirates in April 1972 was said by the Foreign Minister of the UAE to be the first official visit by an Arab head of state.⁴⁹² Sheikh Zayyid of Abu Dhabi visited the Sudan in February 1973 and donated \$3 million as a gift for Sudanese development.⁴⁹³ More assistance was forthcoming from the UAE and there were discussions of the Sudan

⁴⁹⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 8, 1976, cited in FBIS, June 9, 1976, p. D1. Omdurman Domestic Service, June 9, 1976, cited in FBIS, June 10, 1976, p. D1.

⁴⁹¹ Professor Peter Bechtold suggests that the independence of several of the Gulf states in 1971 may have facilitated the Sudan's turn to closer relations with the Arab "conservatives": it was easy to establish strong relations with these new states in the name of Arab solidarity and there was no taint of past enmity. Discussion with Professor Bechtold, April 15, 1983.

⁴⁹² Abu Dhabi Domestic Service, April 21, 1972, cited in FBIS, April 21, 1972, p. B1.

⁴⁹³ MENA, Cairo, March 1, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 2, 1972, p. T6.

⁴⁹⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, February 19, 1973, cited in FBIS, February 21, 1973, p. T8.

assisting at the war college in Abu Dhabi.⁴⁹⁴ Both sides acknowledged that there was a special warmth to the relationship. Following the May 1972 talks between Sheikh Zayyid and President Nimeiri, the UAE Foreign Minister said that the talks were

not like the traditional talks which are normally held between states linked by nothing except formal diplomatic relations... relations between the Sudan and the UAE are for more than these formal relations... Nimeiri has a special place in the hearts of the sons of the Gulf.⁴⁹⁵

Following Nimeiri's visit to the Gulf in December 1974, a joint ministerial committee was established to supervise and follow up implementation of all aspects of bilateral cooperation.⁴⁹⁶

Relations with the other Gulf states was good, particularly with Kuwait and Qatar, who provided development assistance to the Sudan.⁴⁹⁷ It was Kuwait whom the Sudan approached about the idea of an integrated Arab program for Sudanese agricultural development and it was the Kuwait Fund which did the preliminary study.⁴⁹⁸

PLO

Throughout the 1971-1976 period there was continued Sudanese support of the general Arab line on the Palestinian question. Only once were there problems in the relationship with the PLO and that was over the March 1973 Black September incident at the Saudi Embassy in

⁴⁹⁵ Omdurman Domestic Service, April 28, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 1, 1972, p. B1.

⁴⁹⁶ Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1974.

⁴⁹⁷ There was a loan of over \$10 million from the Kuwait Fund in July 1973 (Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1973) and a \$14 million loan from Qatar, (Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, March 28, 1974, cited in FBIS, April 12, 1974, p. T4.

⁴⁹⁸ Interview with Mansour Khaid.

Khartoum. The Fatah office in Khartoum was closed briefly and although Arafat denied PLO involvement in the affairs, Nimeiri took a relatively hard line, saying that if the PLO had not been involved "then Fatah should condemn those responsible, beginning with the absconding director of its Khartoum office."⁴⁹⁹

The Sudanese government took the position that the incident was an insult to Sudanese sovereignty, should not have taken place in a country which had given so much to the Palestinian movement, and was in fact contrary to the best interests of the Palestinians themselves. But the strain in PLO-Sudanese relations was short-lived. Following the mediation of the Arab League, the PLO office in Khartoum was reopened in the month following the incident.⁵⁰⁰ The quick healing of the breach may have been due to some assurances by the Sudan to the PLO that the eight accused men would not be subject to death or lengthy imprisonment. Certainly the pressure on the Sudanese government to take such a course was great.⁵⁰¹ Other than this incident, Sudanese-PLO relations were uniformly good throughout this period.

Jordan

Sudanese policy toward Jordan was clearly connected with the overall Arab-Israeli issue. Although there were normal relations between the two nations on a bilateral level throughout the period, and in

⁴⁹⁹ Speech by President Nimeiri on Fedayeen Action in Nation, Omdurman Domestic Service, March 6, 1973, cited in FBIS, March 7, 1973, pp. T1-7.

⁵⁰⁰ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁵⁰¹ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

spring 1976 Nimeiri spoke warmly of an upcoming trip to Jordan, instances of Jordanian-Palestinian conflict brought the same condemnation of Jordan as in 1969-1971.⁵⁰² Concerning incidents between the PLO and Jordan, the Sudan invariably "defined its stance in accordance with the PLO's position."⁵⁰³ President Nimeiri's response to the Hussein Plan of March 1972 was characteristic of policy toward Jordan in this period: cool and slow reaction to anything related to inter-Arab politics, followed by alignment within the Arab mainstream. Although Egypt broke diplomatic relations with Jordan over the Hussein Plan, the Sudan did not, and it appears that, on a less significant level, the Sudan was practicing with Jordan what it was attempting to do with other countries: disengagement of bilateral and multilateral relations. Purely bilateral relations remained good in this period despite occasional criticism of Jordanian policy on Palestinian issues.

Iraq

The Arab state with which the Sudan had the most serious problem during this period was Iraq, although bad relations between the two nations were brief. During the three days in which opposition forces took charge of the government during the coup of July 1971, an Iraqi aircraft crashed in Saudi Arabia on its way to the Sudan carrying, according to the Iraqis, a member of the Iraqi National Command and Ba'ath party officials on their way to congratulate the new Sudanese

⁵⁰² Interview of President Nimeiri, Ad Dustur, Amman, April 17, 1976, cited in FBIS, April 19, 1976, pp. 14-6.

⁵⁰³ MENA, Cairo, March 18, 1976, cited in FBIS, March 19, 1976, pp. 13-4.

government.⁵⁰⁴ Angry at this evidence of Iraqi support for the coup, on July 24, 1971 the Sudan ordered the Iraqi charge and the entire Embassy staff to leave the Sudan and diplomatic relations were broken.⁵⁰⁵ For about one year Sudanese policy toward Iraq was very hostile, in the face of perceived Iraqi hostility. In March 1972 Iraq was accused by SUNA of obtaining passports from a number of Arab countries, under the guise of aiding the Palestinians, in order to infiltrate persons into the Sudan to assassinate prominent Sudanese.⁵⁰⁶ Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein was referred to in the Sudanese press as "Iraq's executioner."⁵⁰⁷

By the summer of 1972, however, Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid had taken the initiative to meet with the Iraqi ambassador to the UN to discuss restoration of diplomatic relations. The Foreign Minister himself, less affected personally by the July 1971 coup, had a very favorable image of Iraq, perceiving it as one of the few Arab countries serious about Arab unity and ready to help improve the lot of the Arab peoples.⁵⁰⁸ As a result of his initiative, it was announced on August 1, 1972 that diplomatic relations between the two countries were to be restored.⁵⁰⁹ For the rest of the 1971-1976 period relations between the Sudan and Iraq were, as President Nimeiri put it

⁵⁰⁴ Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1971

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁶ SUNA report, March 4, 1972, cited by MENA, Cairo, March 4, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 8, 1972, p. T5.

⁵⁰⁷ Editorial in Al Ayyam, March 30, 1975, cited in FBIS, April 19, 1972, pp. T4-5.

⁵⁰⁸ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

⁵⁰⁹ Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1972.

in December 1974, "normal like the Sudan's relations with the other fraternal Arab states."⁵¹⁰ The Sudan's friendly relations with Iraq after 1972 were not apparently undermined by the Sudan's good relations with both Syria and Kuwait, with both of whom Iraq had conflicts during this period, nor by the different Iraqi and Sudanese positions on the Egyptian-Israeli agreements of the period, particularly Sinai II. Despite the Sudan's firm support of Sadat, and Iraq's condemnation of the agreement, relations remained warm, with high-level delegations exchanged in March and May 1976.⁵¹¹ The Sudan began purchasing oil supplies from Iraq during this period beginning in 1975 and a second oil sale agreement was signed in April 1976.⁵¹²

Morocco

Relations with Morocco, which had been no different than toward most of the Arab "conservatives" in 1969-1971, became much more friendly after 1971. In June 1974, just before the first rapprochement with Libya, Nimeiri announced that King Hassan had sent \$1 million to the Sudan to help repay the Libyan loan that was causing trouble

⁵¹⁰ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Bayraq, Beirut, November 14, 1974, cited in FBIS, December 6, 1974, pp. 15-7.

⁵¹¹ In March 1976 Sudanese Minister of Industry Baddreddin Suleiman visited Iraq with a delegation (Baghdad Domestic Service, March 31, 1976, cited in FBIS, April 1, 1976, p. E1). In May 1976 an Iraqi delegation visited Khartoum for the May 25th anniversary with messages from Iraqi President Bakr (Omdurman Domestic Service, May 26, 1976, cited in FBIS, May 27, 1976, p. 14).

⁵¹² Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1976.

⁵¹³ Monthly radio broadcast to the nation by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, June 10, 1974, cited in FBIS, June 12, 1974, pp. 19-15. Hassan had just overcome a coup attempt connected with Libya's Qadafi and thus the gift may have had more to do with Hassan and Nimeiri having a common enemy than actual concern with Moroccan-Sudanese relations.

between Libya and the Sudan.⁵¹³ Two months later the Sudan supported Morocco in its disagreement with Spain over the Spanish Sahara. President Nimeiri assured King Hassan's emissary in August 1974 that the Sudan supported Morocco because the Spanish Sahara had been an Arab and Islamic land from ancient times.⁵¹⁴ In October 1975 Nimeiri offered more substantial support, offering 10,000 sheep to feed the participants in the "Green March" from Morocco to the disputed territory and also sending a delegation to join the Moroccans.⁵¹⁵ As the dispute ceased to be a conflict between an Arab country and a non-Arab country when fighting broke out between Morocco and Algeria in January 1976 over the fate of the Spanish Sahara, the Sudan became somewhat less clearly supportive of Morocco and reverted to calling for an Arab League foreign ministers' summit to deal with the crisis before Spain evacuated in February/March 1976.⁵¹⁶ It was not until after the end of the 1971-1976 period that a policy on this inter-Arab conflict over the Saharan territory would develop in the Sudan, and even then it took some time to become clear.

Syria

There were friendly relations with Syria, with visits exchanged during the period, including in March 1974 a first visit by Nimeiri to Damascus.⁵¹⁷ The visit resulted in a call for increased cooperation

⁵¹⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 11, 1974, cited in FBIS, August 13, 1974, p. 19.

⁵¹⁵ Agence France Presse, October 21, 1975, cited in FBIS, October 22, 1975, p. 14.

⁵¹⁶ MENA, Cairo, February 24, 1976, cited in FBIS, February 25, 1976, p. A3.

⁵¹⁷ Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1974.

and establishment of a joint committee of the SSU and the Syrian Ba'ath Party. Assad praised Nimeiri's mediation attempt in the Ethiopian civil war in February 1975 and Nimeiri took a very soft line on Syrian actions in Lebanon, even after it had become clear that Syrian-Egyptian relations were deteriorating over the issue.⁵¹⁸

Other Arab States

Sudanese policy toward the rest of the Arab states was friendly but uneventful during this period. Sudanese dealings with these nations appeared to be largely through their contact within the Arab League.

Policy towards the non-Arab African States

The period between July 1971 and July 1976 was one of extraordinarily good relations between the Sudan and the nations of sub-Saharan Africa. As membership in the African "radical" group in had given the Sudan a coterie of African friends in 1969-1971, conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord in February 1972 permitted the promotion of good relations with all African countries. While no longer distinctively radical in African politics, the Sudan managed to achieve good relations with the more "conservative" African states, without losing its friendships with its African associates of the 1969-1971 period. Relations with the neighboring African states -- always the most important aspect of the Sudan's African policy -- were remarkably good. By the end of 1971 problems with Uganda were well to their way to solution and the tensions which were to follow the change

⁵¹⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, February 17, 1975, cited in FBIS, February 20, 1975, p. 110. See also introductory section on policy toward the Arab states for Sudanese policy toward Syrian actions in Lebanon.

of government in Ethiopia in 1974 did not to begin to become really vexing until 1977-1978. The Sudan's African policy in this period was based primarily on the necessity of obtaining and consolidating the resolution of the southern Sudan conflict, but also on the connected concepts of border security, the desire to play a leading role in an Afro-Arab dialogue, and interest in playing the traditional Sudanese role of mediator in conflicts within and among African states. A number of techniques were used to achieve these ends.

President Nimeiri announced in early March 1972 that in the previous four months the Sudan had

launched an intensive campaign abroad aimed at building bridges to our neighbors... {aimed at} projecting the new features of Sudanese policy concerning the South.⁵¹⁹

This bridge-building resulted in the consolidation of already good relations with Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and accomodation with Idi Amin at the end of 1971 and the beginning of 1972. Good relations were also promoted with the other neighboring states, plus Somalia and Tanzania, through ministerial and presidential visits, protocols and agreements and the establishment of bilateral and trilateral commissions.

Visits to many non-neighboring African states, as well as the convocation of conferences bringing together African and Arab diplomats and experts (such as the Conferences on Diplomacy and Development in 1974 and on Liberation and Development in 1976) were used not only to cement relations with other African nations. They were also aimed at promoting an Afro-Arab dialogue not only in the

⁵¹⁹ Speech of President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, March 3, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 6, 1972, pp. T1-5.

interests of promoting the Arab cause in Africa but also of obtaining Arab assistance to poor African states especially in the wake of the 1973/74 oil price rises. Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid was involved in efforts to coordinate Arab aid to Africa, presiding over an OAU commission to organize Arab assistance which culminated in the establishment of the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (ABEDA) as well as bilateral Arab aid to African nations. Of course the resolution of the civil war in the Sudan not only made possible such a high-profile policy in Africa but also led Sudanese officials to believe that the Sudan was itself a model of Afro-Arab accommodation.

Another factor related to the conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord was a revival of the traditional Sudanese interest in international mediation. The prevention of conflict within and among the Sudan's neighbors was not only aimed at the security of the Sudan itself, but also based on a projection of the Sudan as a model of what mediation and conciliation could accomplish. Mediation at some level was offered in disagreements and conflicts between Chad and Libya, Uganda and Tanzania, Ethiopia and Somalia, and within Ethiopia between the central government and the Eritrean rebels.

The final major component of Sudanese African policy was an extension of the good neighbor policy and its accommodation with the policy of supporting African liberation groups. A clear distinction was drawn between "liberation groups" in South Africa and the remaining colonies of Africa, on the one hand, which the Sudan continued to aid, and opposition or sessionist groups within existing

African countries, on the other hand, which the Sudan vowed not to assist.

Ethiopia

As always the most important relationship with a non-Arab African state was with Ethiopia. Up to the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in September 1974, Sudanese policy towards Ethiopia was very friendly and the relationship flourished, particularly in the period during and following the conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord in February 1972. This high level of relations between the two nations, begun well before the 1971 coup, was based, from the perspective of the Sudan, on the warm relationship with Haile Selassie, who played a major role in the conclusion of the agreement ending the Sudanese civil war. As a result of the earlier agreement between the Sudan and Ethiopia, the Sudan had stopped aid to the Eritreans and the Emperor had not only stopped aid to the southern Sudanese but readily played a role in the negotiations. President Nimeiri visited Ethiopia in November 1971, for the forty-first anniversary of Haile Selassie's rule, and the Emperor visited the Sudan twice, in January 1972 and March 1973. By April 1972 a border agreement had been signed following meetings of a joint border commission, part of a larger Joint Ministerial Committee which continued to meet up to the time of Haile Selassie's overthrow in 1974. The ease with which the two governments were able to resolve long-standing border problems was due to the atmosphere of trust engendered by Ethiopia's positive role in the resolution of the southern Sudan conflict and the fact that, for the first time, the two governments were talking with each other honestly.⁵²⁰ The coming to power in Ethiopia of the Provisional

Military Government in February 1974 was to usher in an entirely new era of relations between the two countries.

The Sudan's reaction to the overthrow of Haile Selassie was very negative because of the warm personal and diplomatic relations with the Emperor and the uncertainty over the direction of the new regime in Ethiopia.⁵²¹ Not wanting, however, to alienate the new government unnecessarily, the Sudanese government showed its misgivings only in the polite, but cool, reception given the first delegation of the new government to Khartoum in October 1974.⁵²² The Sudan tried to intervene to request good treatment for the Emperor and to request that he be permitted to come to the Sudan, but before this request could be answered by the Ethiopian side, a major and bloody shake-up occurred in Addis Ababa and the new head of state, Gen. Aman Andom, who had been known and respected in the Sudan, was overthrown and killed.⁵²³ Gen. Andom had told Sudanese officials in Addis Ababa that he was content to let Nimeiri handle the Eritrean problem and there had been hopes in Khartoum that mediation attempts would prosper.⁵²⁴ His death did not end the attempts, but there was much greater mistrust on the part of the Sudan.⁵²⁵ As early as December 1974 there were reports that for the first time in several years the

⁵²⁰ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

⁵²¹ Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁵²² Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁵²³ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Bayraq, Beirut, November 14, 1974, cited in FBIS, December 6, 1974, pp. 15-7.

⁵²⁴ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

Sudan had begun to permit arms transshipments to cross Sudanese territory to the Eritreans.⁵²⁶ Although relations had clearly begun to become strained, there were still attempts to improve them. An Ethiopian delegation visited Khartoum in December 1974 and in a January 1975 statement Nimeiri thanked the new Ethiopian head of state, Terefe Bante, for his cable on the anniversary of Sudanese independence and praised both Sudanese-Ethiopian friendship and Ethiopian socialism.⁵²⁷

As the battles between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces continued to rage, as the burden of Eritrean refugees on the Sudan increased, President Nimeiri took the initiative for another attempt to mediate between the two sides of the civil conflict in Ethiopia. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Jemal Mohamed Ahmad was sent to Addis Ababa to see if there was any lesson drawn from the Sudan's resolution of its civil war that could be applied to the Ethiopian situation.⁵²⁸ At the same time as he was talking in Addis Ababa with the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, contacts were going on between the Sudanese government and Eritrean groups. The proposals the Sudan presented to both sides included: an immediate ceasefire, a general amnesty, and negotiations without preconditions.⁵²⁹ Although the mediation dragged on for some months, the situation in Ethiopia remained chaotic. All the rest of 1975 and the early part of 1976 passed in this way, the

⁵²⁶ Al Hayah, Beirut, December 2, 1974, cited in FBIS, December 10, 1974, p. 14.

⁵²⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 6, 1975, cited in FBIS, January 8, 1975, p. 12.

⁵²⁸ Interview with Jemal Mohamed Ahmad.

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

Sudanese government keeping a wary eye on the struggle within Ethiopia and maintaining an interest in further mediation. Apparently the conflict in Ethiopia was sporadically spilling over the border in the Sudan, but the Sudanese government kept its peace until March 1976.

Relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia deteriorated sharply in March 1976 as the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a strong statement on Ethiopian violations of Sudanese territory and airspace:

in recent months Ethiopian Air Force violations of our airspace have been repeated systematically, {plus} numerous acts in areas bordering Ethiopia {including} ... aerial photograph and reconnaissance of our sensitive defense positions... {these acts} began in March 1975, {and have been} repeated systematically since then despite protests we have made to their ambassador here and to Ethiopian authorities in Addis. In all cases they gave excuses. We accepted them reluctantly, out of regard for good neighborly relations and in consideration of Ethiopia's domestic circumstances. It has become clear to us, in the light of recent incidents, that these violations... were deliberate... The government of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan considers that our display of wisdom and self-restraint should not be interpreted as weakness, indifference or negligence. Simultaneous with its adherence to good neighborly relations and its appreciation of domestic circumstances in Ethiopia, it will not neglect its basic and sacred duty to protect its territory, airspace and civilians. Henceforth we will take all necessary measures to carry out this sacred duty.⁵³⁰

Although there were reports of a major buildup of Sudanese men and materiel along the Ethiopian border, and of an urgent warning from Nimeiri directly to Ethiopian head of state Bante, the Sudanese government did not publicize this, and some dialogue continued.⁵³¹ Messages were exchanged between the two governments and in early April Ethiopia publicly stated that it had no aggressive intentions towards

⁵³⁰ Statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Omdurman Domestic Service, February 20, 1976, cited in FBIS, March 1, 1976, p. 11.

⁵³¹ Agence France Presse, Paris, March 1, 1976, cited in FBIS, March 2, 1976, p. 11.

the Sudan, and that what had happened was accidental.⁵³²

Although relations between the two states did not deteriorate beyond this point before the end of the July 1971-July 1976 period, there was great concern in Khartoum over the impact on the Sudan of the continuing civil war in Ethiopia. President Nimeiri continued to press both sides to negotiate. In his May 24, 1976 address, Nimeiri called on the Eritreans to accept the central government's recent proposals for settlement and urged that the Ethiopian central government invite the Eritreans to negotiate without preconditions:

Ethiopia must give evidence of its sincerity of intention by refraining from any military operations against the Eritrean people... Sudan cannot ignore this bloody conflict, which is knocking on its eastern door, which is bringing the horrors of war within Sudan's borders and threatening the Eritrean people with extinction and exhausting Ethiopia's resources... {conflicts} within this part of Africa endanger the security of Sudan and the Red Sea and ... Sudan and the Arab nations cannot allow hostile forces to threaten their safety and security.⁵³³

The Sudanese government was well aware by this time that Sudanese opposition leader, Hussein Sherif al Hindi, was being allowed to make broadcasts from Ethiopia, but relations between the two nations remained at this wary level through the end of June 1976.⁵³⁴

Uganda

Sudanese policy towards Uganda become more positive after the coup attempt of July 1971 and within a few months the Sudanese government had moved towards closer relations with Amin. In June 1972 deposed

⁵³² Zaire Press Agency, Kinshasa, April 6, 1976, cited in FBIS, April 9, 1976, p. 17.

⁵³³ MENA, Cairo, May 24, 1976, cited in FBIS, May 25, 1976, p. 14.

⁵³⁴ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

President Obote left the Sudan.⁵³⁵ Several factors were involved in the Sudan's change of policy. A major factor was the end of an ideologically-oriented foreign policy following the 1971 coup attempt and the change of foreign ministers. The negative reaction to Amin had been at least partially due to his relationship with Israel and the West during the period when the Sudan was pro-Soviet and a member of the "radical" Arab group. Most significant was the importance to the Sudanese government of achieving a resolution of the southern conflict: though not as important as relations with Ethiopia in this regard, improved relations with Uganda were needed, particularly while the central government was putting military pressure on the southern Sudanese immediately preceding the negotiations.

The new policy towards Uganda was pragmatic and began to appear as early as August 1971. Although the Sudan protested the kidnapping of a Sudanese official in Kampala, President Nimeiri did not want to

"make a big thing of it...I didn't look at our relations with Uganda as relations with Amin... we knew him as a mean, cheap man."⁵³⁶

Within a couple of months it had become clear that the Amin regime was stabilized and was not going to be dislodged by Obote's fragment of the Ugandan army in the Sudan or Tanzania: it had become "practical" to seek improved relations with Amin.⁵³⁷ Even more important, strong military pressure on the Anya nya was essential to the Sudanese government's strategy of resolving the southern conflict and it was necessary to find a way to end military aid reaching the southerners

⁵³⁵ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁵³⁶ Interview with President Nimeiri.

⁵³⁷ Interview with Farouk Abu Isa.

thorough Uganda. Before the end of 1971 agreement had been reached with Amin: the Sudan would end its aid to Obote and Amin would stop the re-supply of the Anya nya through Uganda.⁵³⁸ Obote did not leave the Sudan for his next haven in Tanzania until June 1972, whether because the Sudanese government was using him as a trump card to hold over Amin until well after the Addis Ababa accord had been reached, or because they offered Obote the opportunity to leave at his own pace. In October 1971 the Sudanese government stated publicly that it was anxious to achieve good relations with Uganda.⁵³⁹ Uganda responded positively and in December 1971 raised its representation in Khartoum to the ambassadorial level (resident in Cairo). Amin announced in mid-December 1971, that Uganda would not interfere with the Sudan's problems in the south, that he wanted to reopen the border, and that he had sent a delegation to Khartoum to discuss these matters.⁵⁴⁰

During the fighting between government forces and southern Sudanese in late December 1971, the Sudan denied Ugandan charges of Sudanese troops crossing the border in pursuit of southerners and reiterated the Sudan's eagerness to achieve "friendly relations" on the basis of "good neighborliness."⁵⁴¹ Although the Ugandan army was put on alert, apparently the positive Sudanese policy had borne fruit: Uganda required any southern Sudanese crossing the border to hand over their

⁵³⁸ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

⁵³⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, October 6, 1971, cited in FBIS, October 8, 1971, p. T12.

⁵⁴⁰ Reuters, Nairobi, December 15, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 17, 1971, p. U1.

⁵⁴¹ Statement by the Minister of Information and Culture, Omdurman Domestic Service, December 16, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 17, 1971, p. T4.

weapons and declared its intention to maintain good relations with the Sudan.⁵⁴²

It was no coincidence that the major improvement in relations between the Sudan and Uganda occurred at the same time as the negotiation and conclusion of the Addis Ababa agreement. The Sudan's major concern with Uganda had always been its aid to the southern Sudanese and, when the Sudan agreed to stop supporting Obote's efforts to topple Amin, Amin made it clear that he was not going to help the southern Sudanese any longer.⁵⁴³ During January and February 1972, which saw intense negotiations between the southerners and the Sudanese government, the Sudan also sent emissaries to Uganda. On February 1, 1972 SSU Political Bureau member and Presidential Advisor on Southern Affairs Peter Gatkuoth announced that very positive results had come out of his latest visit to Kampala.⁵⁴⁴ He said that Amin had given several assurances: he promised to give all assistance necessary for the Sudan to end rebel operations in the south; he had agreed to issue an ultimatum to Sudanese rebels in Uganda asking them to return to the Sudan; he had banned the dispatch of arms to the southern Sudan by any and all means; and he was hoping soon to meet with President Nimeiri.⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴² Reuters, Nairobi, December 15, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 17, 1971, p. U1.

⁵⁴³ Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁵⁴⁴ MENA, Cairo, February 1, 1972, cited in FBIS, February 2, 1972, pp. T2-3.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

During the period following the conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord in February 1972 very friendly relations were established between the Sudan and Uganda. The end to the relationship between Amin and the Israelis in early 1972 was greeted enthusiastically in Khartoum.⁵⁴⁶ The border was formally reopened in May 1972 and in June 1972 a mutual defense agreement was signed during a visit by Amin to Khartoum.⁵⁴⁷

The Sudan had enjoyed good relations with Tanzania for some time, and by the end of 1971 had improved its relations with Uganda considerably, so the conflict between them which broke out sporadically throughout the 1971-1976 period could have created a difficult situation for the Sudan. The policy which was adopted towards the Ugandan-Tanzanian conflict was in accordance with OAU principles of non-interference and succeeded in allowing the the Sudan to enjoy good relations with both sides. The security threat to the Sudan, particularly the danger of upsetting the new stability of the southern region, prompted a completely "hands-off" policy. This policy was regarded as so important by the Sudanese decision-makers that they were willing to allow relations with both Egypt and Libya, already deteriorating over other issues, to sink to their lowest ebb yet by refusing to allow their Arab colleagues to ship arms and materiel to Uganda through the Sudan in September 1972.

⁵⁴⁶ Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁵⁴⁷ Arab Report and Record, May 1-15 and June 16-31, 1972.

The Sudan refused to view the conflict between Uganda and Tanzania from the same perspective as Libya did:

We appreciate Uganda's stand against imperialism and Zionism... However, this does not mean that we share the Libyan government's view that the latest crisis between Uganda and Tanzania can be a confrontation with British imperialism by Uganda. We regard this crisis as an incident between two African countries to which we are linked by the closest ties... {and we do not want to be a party} to fanning the fire of war between them.⁵⁴⁸

Although the Libyan airplanes incident was a catalyst for serious deterioration in Sudanese relations with both Libya and Egypt, it did not appear to have any effect at all on Sudanese relations with Uganda. Two weeks later, in early October, Sudanese First Vice President Gen. Bagir went to Kampala to attend the celebration of Uganda's tenth anniversary of independence and returned with word that the Ugandan Minister of Defense would attend the upcoming opening of the Sudanese People's Assembly.⁵⁴⁹

Throughout the rest of the 1971-1976 period relations between the Sudan and Uganda were good, although at a low profile. There were a few visits exchanged and the Joint Technical Committee, set up in the 1972 defense agreement, met at least once, in the spring of 1973.⁵⁵⁰ There was no indication that the continuing tension between Uganda and Tanzania -- in which Nimeiri offered more than once to mediate -- was affecting Sudanese relations with either country.

⁵⁴⁸ Statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Omdurman Domestic Service, September 22, 1972, cited in FBIS, September 25, 1972, p. T2.

⁵⁴⁹ MENA, Cairo, October 7, 1972, cited in FBIS, October 10, 1972, pp. T4-5.

⁵⁵⁰ SUNA report, Omdurman Domestic Service, March 11, 1973, cited in FBIS, March 14, 1973, p. T7.

Other Neighboring African Nations

Sudanese relations with the other neighboring African states, already good, continued thus in 1971-1976. Relations with Kenya, which had never really been poor (because the Kenyans had always been careful not to let expatriate southern Sudanese appear in public and irritate the Sudanese), improved noticeably after the conclusion of the Addis Ababa accord, and because of it.⁵⁵¹ The new stability of the southern Sudan was an economic as well as a political boon for Kenya, as much of the southern Sudan's external trade goes through the Kenyan port of Mombasa. In June 1973 a trilateral ministerial committee of the Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia met in Nairobi, attended by Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid and a large delegation.⁵⁵² A bilateral ministerial committee for Kenya and the Sudan was also established, and at its March 1976 meeting agreement was reached on direct telephone, road and railway links between the two countries.⁵⁵³

Relations with Zaire were similar. As did other African countries, Zaire reacted very positively to the Addis accord. In March 1972 it expelled southern Sudanese politician Gordon Murtuot for criticizing the agreement. The government of Zaire noted that it was indignant over his statements and had taken this action to "preserve the good relations which exist between the Sudan and the Republic of Zaire."⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵¹ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

⁵⁵² Nairobi Domestic Service, June 20, 1973, cited in FBIS, June 21, 1973, p. S1.

⁵⁵³ MENA, Cairo, March 5, 1976, cited in FBIS, March 5, 1976, p. 14.

⁵⁵⁴ Bulletin Quotidien de L'ACI, Brazzaville, March 1, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 9, 1972, p. V3.

In September 1974 Nimeiri visited Brazzaville and agreement was reached on the establishment of a joint committee to meet once yearly to coordinate cooperation, particularly projects in the area of the equatorial lakes.⁵⁵⁵

Relations with Chad were equally good. Talks on joint transport and communications were held with President Tombalbaye when he visited Khartoum in February 1972.⁵⁵⁶ Tombalbaye noted that there were more than two million Chadi nationals living in the Sudan and said it was necessary for this reason for the two governments to strengthen ties not only among young people and militants, but also between the two security services.⁵⁵⁷ In a foreshadowing of extensive Sudanese involvement after 1976 in tensions between Libya and Chad and among the factions of the Chadi civil war, a Chadi delegation visited Khartoum in December 1971, asking Nimeiri to mediate between Chad and Libya.⁵⁵⁸ President Nimeiri responded that he would do what he could but that the existing mediation efforts of Niger's President Hamani should be given an opportunity to work out. Sudanese policy towards Chadi dissidents was clear. Clashes between them and Chadi government forces occurred near the Chadi-Sudanese border in April and May 1972, for instance, and a Defense Ministry spokesman referred to the Chadi opposition as "guerillas hostile to the legitimate regime."⁵⁵⁹ He said

⁵⁵⁵ Arab Report and Record, September 1-15, 1974.

⁵⁵⁶ Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1972.

⁵⁵⁷ La Semaine, Brazzaville, February 27, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 1, 1972, p. VI.

⁵⁵⁸ Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1971.

⁵⁵⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, May 9, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 9, 1972, p. T7.

that the Sudan was determined to preserve the stability, security and supremacy of law within Chad.⁵⁶⁰ Continued clashes within Chad received the same response from the Sudanese government, which was praised by Chadi officials who said that the Sudan "could never be a place where rebels carry out subversion... FROLINAT has never been received by the Sudanese government."⁵⁶¹ Several agreements were signed between the two nations and in March 1973 the first meeting was held of the Chadi-Sudanese Joint Economic Committee.⁵⁶² It was not until the total breakdown of civil order in Chad after the end of this period, that the Sudanese government felt compelled to take a more active role in attempts to reconcile warring Chadi factions.

Non-neighboring African Nations

While relations were good with virtually all African nations with which the Sudan had links during the 1971-1976 period, ties with Somalia and Tanzania were the closest of any non-neighboring African states. President Nimeiri visited Dar es Salaam in July 1972 and the following month agreements were ratified allowing Tanzanian citizens to stay in the Sudan for three months without a permit, as well as technical, cultural, educational and scientific agreements.⁵⁶³ President Nimeiri was touched by the \$70,000 contribution of Tanzania

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Agence France Presse, May 16, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 18, 1972, pp. V1-2.

⁵⁶² There was an agreement on criminal extradition in February 1972 (La Semaine, Brazzaville, February 27, 1972, cited in FBIS, March 1, 1972, p. T6) and on trade and telecommunications in June 1972 (Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1972).

⁵⁶³ Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1972. Omdurman Domestic Service, September 11, 1972, cited in FBIS, September 12, 1972, p. T4.

to southern Sudanese relief and rehabilitation in January 1973, and this strengthened already warm personal relations between him and Nyerere.⁵⁶⁴ Nyerere visited Khartoum in October 1974, and visits were exchanged as well by lower-ranking officials throughout the period. A joint committee was established in January 1973 and met sporadically. As with Uganda, the Sudan's neutrality in the Uganda-Tanzania conflict did not appear to have any impact on relations with Tanzania. Probably the Sudan's neutrality was all the more appreciated by Nyerere in view of Libyan and Egyptian support of Amin, and considering the Sudan's shared border with Uganda.

Relations with Somalia were good, as in 1969-1971, with visits exchanged by the two heads of state. There were, however, some strains in the relationship over Somalia's growing reliance on the Soviet Union. At a point in the summer of 1975 when the Sudan was becoming increasingly concerned about instability in the Horn of Africa (particularly the conflict in the Ogaden) and about Soviet penetration of the region, Nimeiri gently chided the Somalis:

world powers must be kept out of these regions {Africa, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean}... any action, even with the best intentions, to give world powers naval facilities would introduce conflict into these areas sooner or later... News of the presence of military bases in Somalia has increased our fears and we hope it is not true. But some Somali brothers have admitted technical aid and we fear this is the beginning of more involvement.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁴ Nimeiri was touched deeply by the fact that as poor a country as Tanzania wanted to contribute to rebuilding the south. Interview with Mansour Khalid.

⁵⁶⁵ Interview of President Nimeiri, Daily Star, Beirut, August 20, 1975, cited in FBIS, August 21, 1976, pp. 14-6.

Nimeiri's efforts to mediate between Ethiopia and Somalia in mid-1973 were as fruitless as the mediation attempts between the Ethiopians and Eritreans, but they represented an effort to resolve a war which threatened the stability of the entire Horn of Africa and invited superpower interference in the area.

Policy toward the People's Republic of China, Yugoslavia, Iran, India and Pakistan

Other than the relationships with the superpowers, the superpower allies of Eastern and Western Europe, the Arab world, and Africa, the Sudan's only significant foreign relationships were with the People's Republic of China (and to a lesser extent along the same dimension, North Korea), Yugoslavia, Iran, India and Pakistan. Policy toward the PRC and Yugoslavia followed similar patterns to each other and to previous periods.

Traditionally Sudanese relations with both the PRC and Yugoslavia had been good, even before the coup of 1969, but the period of 1971-1976, when the Sudan left its close association with the Soviet Union and had not yet clearly become an American client state, saw a rapid acceleration of relations with both, especially China, which began to supply major weapons and sharply increased its aid to the Sudan after 1971. Both states appeared to represent to the Sudan a path between the superpowers which was particularly appropriate for the 1971-1976 period: both were socialist states, prominent in the non-aligned movement, relatively unattached to either superpower but enjoying relations with both. They may have been viewed in Khartoum along the same dimension: they were often mentioned in the same context as

"friendly socialist states" (apparently meant to contrast them with other socialist states, the Soviet Union and its allies, which were perceived as hostile, at least in the early part of the period). Both were praised for their supportive attitude during the July 1971 coup. Delegations from both visited the Sudan regularly and agreements were signed with both states in the areas of military, economic and technical cooperation. Both were quick to provide assistance for the relief and resettlement of southern Sudanese after the resolution of the civil war. No other nations -- except possibly Romania -- appeared during this period to have been regarded in the same light as the PRC and Yugoslavia: friendly, helpful, models of non-alignment who provided high-quality aid with no strings attached.

People's Republic of China

The first sign that a new emphasis was going to be placed on relations with the PRC came in early October 1971, when not only Nimeiri but all the members of the RCC attended the Chinese Embassy's celebration of its national day. In case the significance of this was missed by observers, Omdurman Radio took care to point out that Nimeiri had in the past appointed one or two officials to represent the government at this function and noted

the PRC Ambassador and embassy staff recognized the president's visit with great appreciation and deep understanding of its significance.⁵⁶⁶

In December 1971 Defense Minister, First Vice President and former RCC member Gen. Khalid Hassan Abbas visited Peking, signed two technical and economic cooperation agreements and returned with word of

⁵⁶⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, October 1, 1971, cited in FBIS, October 1, 1971, p. T8.

another \$40 million loan on concessional terms, plus additional technical aid.⁵⁶⁷ At the end of January and again in April 1972 agreements on military cooperation were signed.⁵⁶⁸ By February 1972 Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid claimed that the PRC had doubled its aid to the Sudan.⁵⁶⁹ At the 1972 celebration of the anniversary of the "May Revolution" the Sudanese Chief of Staff noted that the Chinese aircraft were being flown by Sudanese pilots and he praised Chinese military aid.⁵⁷⁰ In June 1972 a trade protocol was signed, a shipment of Chinese aid for the southern Sudan arrived, and it was reported that the Chinese arms deal had included eight MIG-17's and enough tanks to equip an armored division.⁵⁷¹ President Nimeiri noted that the Chinese had given, not sold, the equipment to the Sudan and the Chief of Staff added that complete secrecy had been maintained at the time the equipment had been transferred.⁵⁷² The Chief of Staff also noted that the PRC was providing spare parts, unlike the Soviet Union which, he said, used spare parts as a means of applying political pressure. In terms of both assembly and training, he said, the Chinese equipment was easier to use because of Chinese modifications

⁵⁶⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, December 24, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 27, 1971, p. T5.

⁵⁶⁸ MENA, Cairo, January 24, 1972, cited in FBIS, January 24, 1972, p. T4. Omdurman Radio, April 16, 1972, cited in Arab Report and Record, April 16-31, 1972.

⁵⁶⁹ Interview of Mansour Khalid in Le Monde, Paris, February 16, 1972, cited in FBIS, February 25, 1972, p. T11.

⁵⁷⁰ Agence France Presse, Paris, May 24, 1972, cited in FBIS, May 25, 1972, p. T4.

⁵⁷¹ Interviews with President Nimeiri and Chief of Staff Awad Khalafallah, Agence France Presse, Paris, June 1, 1972, cited in FBIS, June 6, 1972. pp. T7-8.

⁵⁷² Ibid.

of the original Soviet designs.⁵⁷³

Within one year after the abortive coup of July 1971 the PRC had stepped in to fill some of the aspects of the role previously played by the USSR and the relationship between the Sudan and the PRC was flourishing on all levels. This pattern continued throughout the 1971-1976 period, including exchanged delegations and continued Chinese aid in various fields. In a lighter vein, the Chinese Ambassadaor remarked in a speech in Dongola, birthplace of the Mahdi, that a connection between the two countries went back a long way: both had suffered from the depradations of the "reactionary General Gordon."⁵⁷⁴

In a less substantial way, Sudanese policy toward North Korea followed a similar pattern to that of the PRC. Relations with North Korea were often mentioned in the same vein as relations with the Chinese and there was some North Korean aid to the Sudan.

Yugoslavia

Policy toward Yugoslavia continued along the positive line established in 1969-1971. Yugoslavia was praised for its supportive attitude during the July 1971 coup attempt and for its aid for the relief of the southern Sudan. The Yugoslav Minister of Defense visited twice during this period and agreements were reached on military cooperation in Janaury 1972, and technical cooperation

⁵⁷³ ibid.

⁵⁷⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, February 7, 1973, cited in FBIS, February 8, 1973, p. T3.

⁵⁷⁵ Omdurman Domestic Service, November 12, 1971, cited in FBIS,

(January 1975).⁵⁷⁵ Although relations with Yugoslavia followed the same general patterns as relations with the PRC, Yugoslavia was not in a position to provide the same volume or level of assistance (particularly military aid).

Iran

An interesting by-product of the pragmatic foreign policy of the 1971-1976 period was the establishment of a new relationship with Iran, with which there had been no diplomatic relations prior to August 1972. Although the Sudan criticized the Shah's seizure of the Tunbs and Abu Musa Islands at the end of 1971, the rebuke was relatively mild:

The relationship between the Arab states and Iran and the close historical ties linking them should enable the Arab and Iranian sides to reach understanding and to cooperate in preserving security and stability in the area... the Sudan... declares its concern for the Arabs of those islands... {and its} support for the question of their absolute sovereignty over these islands...⁵⁷⁶

In August 1972 it was announced that Iran and the Sudan had agreed on the establishment of diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level.⁵⁷⁷ The major improvement in relations, however, did not occur until after the October 1973 Middle East War. As Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid was preparing to make a tour of several Asian and Middle Eastern countries to explain the Arab position, he was contacted by the Minister of Finance who suggested that during his

November 16, 1971, p. T2. Omdurman Domestic Service, January 6, 1975, cited in FBIS, January 30, 1975, p. 14.

⁵⁷⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, December 2, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 3, 1971, p. T3.

⁵⁷⁷ Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1972.

visit to Iran he discuss with the Iranians the possibility of the Sudan importing Iranian light crude oil directly rather than through Shell, as hitherto.⁵⁷⁸ In late 1973 the Foreign Minister discussed these questions with the Shah. While the Iranians adhered to the OPEC prices, they agreed in principle to direct supply and to low-interest loans to pay for the oil.⁵⁷⁹ In February 1974 President Nimeiri payed an official visit to Iran, an oil supply agreement was signed in April 1974 and in June 1974 the Sudan started to receive direct oil shipments, "sufficient for meetings the Sudan's oil requirements."⁵⁸⁰ A trade agreement was signed in August 1974, there were visits exchanged and in January 1975 it was announced that the Iranian government had provided the Sudan with a gift of several new naval vessels.⁵⁸¹

India and Pakistan

Sudanese policy toward India and Pakistan, and toward the conflict between them, was relatively balanced because of the need to retain a good relationship with both a nearby fellow Muslim state and with a major trading partner, the largest single purchaser of Sudanese cotton. Conflict between them elicited a call from the Sudan for withdrawal of the troops of both sides, but an inclination to view India as the aggressor: two statements were issued in December 1971:

⁵⁷⁸ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

⁵⁷⁹ ibid.

⁵⁸⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, October 1, 1974

⁵⁸¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 15, 1975, cited in FBIS, January 17, 1975, p. 15.

the Sudan is concerned about Indian-Pakistani clashes... in view of its friendly relations with the two.. {and} addresses a warm, fraternal appeal to both to withdraw forces and end the dispute... the Sudan respects Pakistan's unity and ... whatever occurs inside is a domestic matter which concerns the Pakistani people alone...^{5*2}

the Sudanese people do not approve of aggression against any state, regardless of the reason. Therefore, we do not accept the reasons given by the Indian government in justification of its attack against the government of Pakistan. We have conveyed this view to them.^{5*3}

In June 1972 President Bhutto of Pakistan visited the Sudan on his Arab tour. In September 1973 the Sudan formally recognized Bangladesh, but did not appear to develop any significant relationship with the new nation. In November 1974 President Nimeiri and a high-level delegation visited India, where he declared:

All of us are aware that the Sudan has more trade dealings with India than with any other state. It is natural for us, therefore, to create a suitable atmosphere to strengthen economic and trade relations as well as other relations which will benefit us in our development.^{5*4}

CONCLUSION

By the end of June 1976 domestic power politics had changed dramatically from July 1971. All but one of the officers of the RCC had left power, and then been returned to government in 1975-76 in positions of vastly diminished power. The group including former Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, which had dominated foreign and

^{5*2} Statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Omdurman Domestic Service, December 6, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 6, 1971, pp. T7-8.

^{5*3} Statement by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, December 17, 1971, cited in FBIS, December 20, 1971, pp. T4-7.

^{5*4} Omdurman Domestic Service, November 26, 1974, cited in FBIS, November 27, 1974, p. 15.

domestic politics (with Nimeiri's approval and under his ultimate control) up to January 1975 was mostly still in government but also in positions of reduced power. Other individuals had begun to move into spots of influence near the President in a system where power was centralized in the hands of one man alone and even implementation was moving from the ministries to a centralized apparatus in the palace.

Also by the end of this period the Sudan had good relations with both East and West, but the trust in the Soviet Union which had characterized the 1969-1971 period had never returned. The President was also increasingly concerned with Soviet activities in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea area. Policy toward Egypt and Saudi Arabia was very positive and there were good relations between the Sudan and most the Arab states. Straddling the growing rift between Egypt and the other Arabs, however, was becoming increasingly more difficult in the wake of Sinai II. Relations with Libya were "normal" but there was lingering suspicion over a possible Libyan role in the 1975 coup and growing mistrust of Qadafi's unpredictable behavior and perhaps also of his relationship with the USSR. Sudanese relations with the African neighbors was generally good, but there was escalating discord with the new Ethiopian government and concern over the continuing civil war there. Although there was little public reaction as yet, the civil disorder in Chad was a cloud on the horizon.

Having overcome a move from the left in July 1971, and threats from the right in 1970 and 1973, and having established his own unequalled position within the regime, President Nimeiri may not have anticipated that opposition from traditional elements (such as Sadeq al Mahdi and

Hussein Sherif al Hindi) would make yet another attempt to gain power, this time in cooperation with Libya. What occurred on July 2, 1976 had elements of both a coup d'etat and an invasion: Ansar forces, trained in Libya (and to a lesser extent in Ethiopia) both had been infiltrated and also invaded across the Libyan-Sudanese border while the leaders of the movement waited in an airplane circling Khartoum for a call of victory that never came.

CHAPTER FOUR: SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY, JULY 1976 - JULY 1982

INTRODUCTION

The period from July 1976 to July 1982 was markedly different from the two previous phases of the government which had come to power in May 1969. Although the government had been authoritarian in nature since its inception in 1969, it was in the years following 1976 that power came to rest without qualification in the hands of one man. There was as well a lack of clear policy focus, and the concepts which had guided policy-making in previous periods -- such as 'socialism and anti-imperialism' or 'economic development and national unity' -- were replaced with nothing more than a growing concern for the survival of the regime. The period was increasingly marked by manifestations of domestic unrest: failed or abortive coups, strikes by workers and farmers, and student demonstrations. There were also ominous signs of deterioration in the political structure and a growing divorce of the political authority from political realities.

The concentration of power in one person and the lack of any ideological basis for policy-making resulted in a loss of consistency in foreign policy so marked that it has been referred to as "weathercock politics" by one close observer.⁵⁸⁵ Power concentration also led to a greater personalization of political authority, so that,

⁵⁸⁵ He was not only an observer but also served as Foreign Minister at one time during the 1969-82 period.

as the regime came more and more to equal Nimeiri, threats to the power or position of the President came to be regarded as threats to the Sudan as a nation. As the domestic political and economic situation deteriorated and relations with neighboring states became hostile, all policy -- internal and external -- became little more than another weapon in the arsenal of regime security. Obsession with regime security appeared to be the main reason for the extremely close relations which developed during this period with both Egypt and the United States, both of which were perceived as strategic regime backstops. The guiding precept of foreign policy, which had been ideological in 1969-1971 and pragmatic in 1971-76, had become nothing more than the axiom of survival.

A major element of Sudanese foreign policy in the 1976-1982 period was the Sudan's continuing attempt to project relations with key states as a bilateral phenomenon rather than as a function of regional politics. In this way, the Sudanese government had been able in the previous period to straddle the growing rift between Egypt and the Arab states. This technique was to be used after 1976 both with Egypt and Ethiopia, but in both cases the nature of the regional situations was such that the attempt to disengage bilateral from regional relations with each nation was relatively unsuccessful. By the end of 1979 Nimeiri could no longer take an ambiguous stand on Egypt's Middle East policy and for the period of a little over a year maintained cool relations with Egypt on a diplomatic level. Following the Libyan intervention in Chad at the end of 1980, Nimeiri abandoned the attempt to keep a distance from Sadat's policies and returned to the safety of intimate relations with Egypt. The attempt to ignore the August 1981

pact between Ethiopia, Libya and South Yemen and to maintain the momentum of the reconciliation with Mengistu despite hostile relations between the Sudan and Libya also appeared, by the end of the 1976-1982 period, to be failing. Although relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia had not unraveled completely, there were signs of serious strain and unpublicized border hostilities.

THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

In the 1976-1982 period the decision-making group dwindled to one man. For the first time since independence, the Sudan became in every way a state of one-man rule. Although the last vestige of power outside the Presidency was not purged until August 1979, it is fair to say that even as early as 1976 the focus of decision-making had moved definitively to the palace and that all power and authority rested in the person of President Jaafar Mohamed Nimeiri. The Political Bureau of the S.S.U. and the People's Assembly - vitiated from the beginning - played no role in decision-making in any area.

After the failure of 'reconciliation' with Sadeq al Mahdi and the ouster of Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim in August 1979, there was no figure left in government with power independent of the President. To be sure, there were persons of distinct political orientation in the upper echelons of the SSU, the People's Assembly and in the cabinet throughout the period, including former RCC members, but following the fall of Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim and the failure of the reconciliation with Sadeq al Mahdi to come to fruition, there was no one left who could challenge the President, no one whose power originated anywhere except in his appointment by the President.

The futility of challenging one-man rule was well illustrated by what happened following the dismissal of Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim. As one of the few people in the Sudan who had any regard for the SSU, he decided to run against President Nimeiri for the presidency of the SSU in the fall of 1979. Before the election even took place, Abu al Gasim was persuaded to remove himself from nomination by SSU cadres, who convinced him that the election might split the organization. Despite the withdrawal of his nomination, the SSU election commission appointed by the President cancelled the results of the SSU elections in all of Khartoum province (where Abu al Gasim's nomination had originated), alleging improprieties in election procedures. At the 1980 SSU Congress, Khartoum province was represented only by delegates appointed by the President.

After August 1979 those persons within the government who had distinct political views were not those who were close to the President, who now appeared to be surrounded by a more or less apolitical 'palace guard' whose own power lay solely in their access to him and whom the President could remove from office as easily as he had appointed them. If the President was being advised, it was from within this small inner circle.

Although former Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid was back in the same post for a brief period during 1977, he did not wield the same influence over the President that he had before the President's disenchantment with him. The other Foreign Ministers of the 1976-1982 period were powerless bureaucrats without influence on the President or distinctive ideas about foreign policy. There was no doubt that

the President intended to be his own foreign minister in all but name -- a notion which is illustrated by his remark following the September 1977 dismissal of Foreign Minister Khalid and the appointment Rashid al Taher to that post. Nimeiri expressed confidence that the new Foreign Minister would "carry out my foreign policy to the letter."⁵⁸⁶

DOMESTIC POLITICS, JULY 1976-JULY 1982

Unlike the ideological focus of 1969-1971, and pragmatic policy guidelines of 1971-1976, the period from July 1976 to July 1982 appeared to have no significant domestic policy program. A plan to decentralize government was formulated and partially implemented but appeared to have little impact on domestic politics, and no impact at all on foreign policy.⁵⁸⁷ The half-hearted attempt to project a religious note in Presidential speech-making was in no way a replacement for a distinctive policy focus.⁵⁸⁸ As for the rest of domestic politics, it was marked only by an attempt -- initiated by

⁵⁸⁶ Interview of President Nimeiri in Al Sayyad, October 5, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, October 16-31, 1977.

⁵⁸⁷ Indeed, with revenue and expenditure per province still controlled from Khartoum, the program appeared to have only one major political impact: it created a storm of controversy over the question of the redivision of the southern Sudan into three 'regions.'

⁵⁸⁸ The new interest in religion on the part of the President, which may have been largely a matter of co-opting the increasingly popular Muslim Brotherhood or vitiating their impact, was noticeable primarily in two ways. Several presidential speeches to the nation dwelt at length on the importance of religion and its implementation in political life (Presidential addresses of March 30, 1977 - during the month preceding the national presidential "election"; and December 23, 1979 - in a speech announcing that he was the sole candidate for the presidency of the SSU). The other manifestation was in the publication of the President's book dealing largely with religion, in 1981.

Sudanese outside of the government -- to reconcile the regime with the opposition National Front, by efforts to consolidate the power of the regime and the President within the regime, and by manifestations of system failure.

Some steps taken to maintain the regime were the same as in previous periods: visits by the Head of State and Minister of Defense (and the President was oftentimes the latter as well) to army units, and continuation of monthly Presidential broadcasts to the nation. Other measures included (1) refinement of the internal balance of power of persons around the President; (2) concentration of all decision-making (even on the implementation level in some cases) within the Palace hierarchy, under the direction of apolitical aides with control of access to the President; (3) the ultimate outcome of reconciliation with the regime's main political opponents; and (4) growth in power and status of the security apparatus.

Just as individuals and groups - such as the RCC members, Mansour Khalid, Omer al Haj Moussa and others - had been balanced against one another in previous years, so now as well it seemed that President Nimeiri found it convenient to appoint to high positions persons who would be unlikely to be able to work together in any attempt to unseat him. In fact, the technique appeared to be applied with greater finesse than before. The most important individuals involved in this period were: Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim (the only former RCC member other than the President to have been continuously in government since 1969), Minister for Presidential Affairs Bahauddin Mohamed Idris, Minister of Finance Baddreddin Suleiman, Minister of National Security

General Omer Mohamed al Tayyib, Chief of Staff General Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil, and expatriate opposition leader Sadeq al Mahdi.

The first positive move to balance political personalities around the President during this period came with the appointments of Baddreddin Suleiman as Minister of Economy and Bahauddin Mohamed Idris as Minister for Presidential Affairs. Although both had been in cabinet positions previous to these appointments, their new positions were key posts and it is interesting to note that these promotions were made very close to one another. While these two ministers were not considered hostile to one another, they were not close associates and were most unlikely to form some kind of coalition. To some degree their interests may have been opposite on a personal level, as they were vying for access to the President along with several other political figures.

The second - and most important - move by the President which served to balance power among political figures followed the 'reconciliation' with Sadeq al Mahdi in the summer of 1977. While rumor was rife in Khartoum and the Arab world that the reconciliation would surely mean the downfall of Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, who was thought to oppose the idea, the onset of the reconciliation process saw the elevation of Abu al Gasim to the post of First Vice President, contrary to expectation. In fact, it was he whom the President appointed to head a committee to publicize and implement aspects of the reconciliation. Sadeq al Mahdi (and other former opposition figures as well) were appointed to the SSU Political Bureau to demonstrate the regime's level of commitment to the reconciliation process.

The promotion of Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim following the reconciliation is entirely consistent with the notion of internal power balancing. Sadeq al Mahdi was a very potent force for President Nimeiri to bring back into the domestic political arena. While he certainly could hope to control Sadeq's official power by circumscribing his official activities, the President may not have been entirely sure that he could control a possible rise in Sadeq's domestic support now that he had re-entered the country under the aegis of reconciliation. The only figure of the "May Revolution" who had not been diminished by dismissal and who had any measure of popular support as an individual was Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim. He had once been viewed as one of the strong-men of the RCC and was still a popular figure among certain elements of the population.⁵⁸⁹

If there was any doubt that his promotion was somehow related to the reconciliation with Sadeq al Mahdi, one only has to look at the timing of his dismissal from office. While there were reasons popularly believed to account for his dismissal in August 1979 - growing disagreements with the President on political and economic issues, and his actions in regard to the railroad strike made in the absence of the President - it is interesting that his dismissal came at a time after Sadeq had resigned from the Political Bureau (in October 1978) in protest over the Sudan's position on the Camp David Accords and after the bulk of the Ansar fighters had returned from their camps in Libya (May 1979). The timing of all these items suggests that the policy disagreements (which surely did exist) and

⁵⁸⁹ He was particularly popular among SSU cadres, southern Sudanese, workers, and some elements of the army.

the President's disapproval of Abu al Gasim's actions in the strike and his leadership of the SSU were only the immediate triggers for an action which may have been contemplated since Sadeq's resignation from the SSU in October 1978.⁵⁹⁰ Further evidence for this interpretation lies in the observation by a person who is a close personal friend of Abu al Gasim and a relative of Sadeq al Mahdi, that during the entire period following the 'reconciliation', the President was covertly seeking to create discord between these two.⁵⁹¹

Following Abu al Gasim's dismissal, former Chief of Staff Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil was made Minister of Defense and First Vice President. If there was to be any disapproval of Abu al Gasim's dismissal in the army, this dissatisfaction would be mitigated by the appointment of a regular army officer. The fact that Abdel Magid was not by any means a likely presidential hopeful, because of the unlikelihood of a western Sudanese being accepted as President, made him a clever choice. His presence in the post of First Vice President also made it safer for the President to continue to trust General Omer Mohamed al Tayyib as head of National Security - which was by this time completely divorced from the army itself.

By the end of the 1976-1982 period, Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim

⁵⁹⁰ All of this is, of course, quite speculative. Both President Nimeiri and Abu al Gasim would undoubtedly disagree with this interpretation.

⁵⁹¹ He suggests that the President did so through Chief of National Security General Omer Mohamed al Tayyib. Interview with Khalid Farah.

⁵⁹² Sadeq left Khartoum during the summer of 1981 and Abu al Gasim retired from political life after his abortive run for the SSU Presidency at the end of 1979.

and Sadeq al Mahdi were out of the arena.⁵⁹² The domestic crisis which brought about the new economic proposals of November 1981 necessitated the removal of Baddreddin Suleiman from the post of Minister of Finance and the reinstatement of former Minister of Finance Ibrahim Moneim Mansour in the midst of a new economic austerity program. But rumors of Baddreddin's political demise were premature, for soon he was named the head of the new 'popular committee' which was to revamp the SSU. Minister for Presidential Affairs Bahauddin Mohamed Idris was still in place, and still controlling access to the President for anyone except a few insiders. In the midst of some domestic confusion, General Abdel Magid was dismissed from all his posts, twenty-two senior army commanders were suddenly pensioned, and General Omer Mohamed al Tayyib (Minister of National Security) was made First Vice President.

By July 1982 the President was left with only three main political advisors: Baddreddin Suleiman, Bahauddin Mohamed Idris, and General Omer Mohamed al Tayyib. None had any power outside the power conferred by having access to the President nor any authority other than that inherent in his appointment by the President; none could realistically hope to succeed to the presidency because of their unpopularity and lack of a military power base; and none appeared to have any significant political orientation or ideology.⁵⁹³

⁵⁹³ Even Baddreddin Suleiman, who had been one of the "Mensheviks" of the 1950's, did not manifest any leftist ideological bent in his years in government under Nimeiri.

The second means of maintaining and enhancing presidential power was the high-level coordination of policy-making and implementation in the Palace within a newly-created internal hierarchy. A third mechanism for maintaining power was set in motion, not by the President himself, but by a Sudanese businessman in the Gulf, who had the idea of bringing about a reconciliation between Nimeiri and opposition leader Sadeq al Mahdi.⁵⁹⁴ In October 1976, only four months after the abortive coup/invasion, the process was set in motion with meetings in London between Sadeq al Mahdi and former RCC member Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid, representing President Nimeiri. Following a series of negotiations involving the mediation of several Sudanese businessmen, including the proposer of the notion, Khalid Farah, as well as Fath al Rahman al Bashir, a friend of the President, agreement was reached on a meeting between Sadeq al Mahdi and President Nimeiri. In July 1977 the two met in Port Sudan and an undisclosed agreement was reached. Within a few weeks political prisoners in the Sudan were being released and amnesty was granted to Sadeq al Mahdi, Sherif al Hindi and other members of the opposition National Front. Although there was a split in the opposition, in March 1978 Sadeq al Mahdi, Muslim Brotherhood leader Hassan al Turabi, Ahmad al Mirghani (a leader of the Khatmiyyah) and other former opposition members had been added to the SSU Political Bureau. In April 1978 an agreement was signed in London on dismantling the Ansar camps in Libya.⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁹⁴ Interview with Khalid Farah.

⁵⁹⁵ This was not accomplished -- because of delays on the part of the Libyan government -- until May 1979. Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

From the point of view of the President, the reconciliation must have been a success: the main element of the external opposition entered the government on undisclosed terms and subsequently resigned; the power of the Mahdi family leadership was substantially diminished by the whole exercise; the potentially powerful Muslim Brotherhood had been successfully coopted and did not leave the government with Sadeq al Mahdi in October 1978; some degree of reconciliation with Libya was achieved through the efforts of Sadeq al Mahdi; and undoubtedly Saudi and Western supporters of Nimeiri were cheered by his show of magnanimity. What concessions the President may have made are not known, although reports emanating from Sadeq's side indicated that the agreement had included repeal of the state of emergency, internal political reforms, and a redress in the balance of relations between the superpowers and with Egypt.⁵⁹⁶ From Sadeq al Mahdi's point of view, the reconciliation could only be viewed, in the long-run, as a disaster. No substantial reforms were made to the political system; Sadeq himself resigned from the SSU Political Bureau in October 1978 in protest of the Sudan's position on the Camp David Accords; and remnants of the National Front remained within the government after Sadeq's departure. Another result was the damage to Sadeq al Mahdi's image among the Sudanese as a whole and particularly among his Ansar supporters. For the Sudanese, once Sadeq al Mahdi had reconciled himself with Nimeiri -- on whatever terms -- any future dissent would look more like sour grapes than principled opposition. The damage to his status among the Ansar was perhaps the worst result of the reconciliation for Sadeq al Mahdi. As a long-time Umma supporter from

⁵⁹⁶ Interview with Sadeq al Mahdi, Le Monde, Paris, September 13, 1977, cited in FBIS, September 14, 1977, pp. 12-3.

the Ansar stronghold of western Sudan said,

he let the sons of the West die for him in July 1976, and within a year was shaking hands with Nimeiri without ever asking the opinion of those who had supported him at such great cost in lives and blood.⁵⁹⁷

It is unlikely that the President started the reconciliation process with the design of coopting the Muslim Brotherhood and striking a major blow at the roots of Sadeq al Mahdi's domestic support, but the result was precisely that. By the end of 1981, Sadeq al Mahdi was back in opposition from outside the Sudan, but immeasurably worse off politically than before the reconciliation.

The fourth technique for maintenance of power was the enhancement of the status and power of the security apparatus and the attempt to increase the size and improve the equipment of the armed services. Attention to security involved a number of different measures: (1) imposition of a state of emergency following the July 1976 events, (2) evening curfews which were imposed for months following July, (3) executions and imprisonment of participants in the coup/invasion, (4) more rigorous application of immigration and identity card laws, (5) streamlining and unification of all security operations at the highest level according to the State Security Law of 1978, and (6) the elevation of the chief of national security first to the cabinet level and ultimately to the post of First Vice President.

Other than the lack-luster decentralization scheme, the dearth of policy-guided programs, and the set of activities which served to enhance or consolidate the power of the President and the regime, the only notable characteristic of domestic politics during this period is

⁵⁹⁷ Interview with Ahmad Ibrahim Diraij, Governor of Darfur.

a collection of phenomena that could most appropriately be characterized as manifestations of system failure. While the notion of system failure is bound to be somewhat subjective in definition, what is meant is the failure to implant viable political institutions, to establish political stability and some administrative continuity, or to accept responsibility for the outcome of government policies.⁵⁹⁸

FOREIGN POLICY JULY 1976 - JULY 1982

Policy toward the USSR, US, and Europe

Overview

While the reversal of policy toward the two superpowers between the 1969-1971 and 1976-1982 periods was clear, the rationales behind the new alignment were not. The Sudan's policy toward the two superpowers in the earlier period had been based on ideological concepts of "socialism and anti-imperialism"; policy toward the two superpowers in the 1976-1982 period was based simply on the extent to which each one represented a strategic threat or a support to the regime in Khartoum. Although the United States was viewed in 1969 as hostile to the Sudan, this perception was a general one: the United States was perceived as having imperialist intentions toward all third world states,

⁵⁹⁸ For example, there was a continuation of cabinet instability, which might have been expected to subside by 1976 when the regime had been in power for over seven years. While the average number of cabinet dismissals was no greater than before, it was also no less. At least fifty-four persons were dismissed from cabinet positions during the years between July 1976 and July 1982. Political and economic problems were invariably blamed on the impotent SSU or individual cabinet members despite the fact that no one but he had the power to make policy. The deliberate creation of myths about the President's early life in government publications (such as Nimeiri: A History of the Sudan, published by the Ministry of Information in 1978) was an ominous sign that the regime was not facing up to political realities.

particularly Arab states. The Soviet Union was viewed at that time as the friend of the developing world and the vanguard against imperialism from the West. The perception of the hostility of the Soviet Union and the friendliness of the United States during the 1976-1982 period was entirely different. The world-wide, ideological focus of the 1969-1971 period had, by 1976, narrowed to a concern for little more than the immediate neighbors of the Sudan, their friendliness or hostility, and their relationships with the superpowers. Sudanese statements on superpower policies throughout the third world changed, not as a result of substantially different Sudanese, American, or Soviet policies in Asia, the Middle East or Africa, but because the requirements of security made it necessary to view American foreign policy in a kinder light, and Soviet foreign policy from a harsher perspective. As in 1969-1971, the Sudanese government saw world politics through a specific lens which colored its perceptions; but now the lens was the needs of security rather than the axioms of ideology.

There is ample evidence to support the notion that the policy of the Sudan toward the US and the USSR during this period was rooted in the Sudan's relations with the two superpowers' regional client states neighboring the Sudan. Relations with Egypt and the United States -- and even more with the Soviet Union, Libya and Ethiopia -- were frequently mentioned in the same context; policy statements of all kinds during this period showed the linkage. Perhaps even more suggestive is the timing of changes in the Sudan's relations with the Soviet Union and its regional clients.

During this period a sharp deterioration in Sudanese relations with Libya and/or Ethiopia appeared to result in a downturn in relations with the Soviet Union. Although the Sudan was slow to implicate the Soviet Union directly in the Libyan-sponsored coup/invasion of July 1976, numerous statements referred to the superpower behind Libya, and in September 1976 the Sudan finally referred directly to the hostility of the Soviet Union toward the Sudan. The worst period of Sudanese-Soviet relations since the aftermath of the July 1971 leftist coup appeared to be set in motion by the new Ethiopian-Soviet relationship and the overt hostility between the Sudan and Ethiopia which started in January 1977, added to the existing enmity with Libya. Equally significant is the fact that the beginning of the process of "normalization" of relations between the Sudan and the USSR (the return of ambassadors to their posts in Khartoum and Moscow) occurred following the Sudanese reconciliation with Libya and the beginning of detente with Ethiopia toward the end of 1977.

Policy toward the United States and Egypt did not did not undergo the same ups and downs as policy toward the Libya, Ethiopia and their superpower ally, so it is more difficult to see a direct correlation in the relationships. Moreover, although there was a downturn in relations with Egypt from the end of 1979 to the beginning of 1981, this coolness was apparent only on the diplomatic level and there was no question of a degeneration of Egyptian-Sudanese relations to a level of actual hostility, as with Libya and Ethiopia. Thus the Sudan's brief attempt to put some distance between it and the Mideast policies of Sadat would have been unlikely to cast a shadow on relations between the Sudan and the United States, and indeed, it did

not. The link between Sudanese relations with Egypt and with the United States was nonetheless clear, however, in statement and in action. The two times neighboring states appeared to pose a threat to the Sudan during this period -- Ethiopia in 1977 and Libya (from Chad) in 1981/82 -- the Sudan turned not only to Egypt for help but also to the United States. Both times the Egyptian-American connection was clear.

Two key features of Sudanese policy toward the superpowers during this period resulted from the link between the the superpowers' and their client states on the borders of the Sudan: the question of granting military facilities in Africa to superpowers, and the concept of strategic encirclement. Military facilities or bases had not been granted by any Sudanese government to any foreign government since the British left at the time of independence. Indeed, Sudanese politicians of almost every persuasion had been unanimous in condemning the very concept of foreign bases in the Sudan, and in Africa as a whole. The government that had come to power in May 1969 was no exception. Even during the heyday of friendship with the Soviet Union during the 1969-1971 period, when Soviet personnel were welcome at every level of the Sudanese government, there was no mention of the Sudan granting 'bases' or 'facilities' to the Soviet Union. Thus when in the fall of 1971 President Nimeiri suggested in an interview that he was willing to grant military "facilities" to the United States, this was a major departure from the policy not only of the "May Revolution" but of every Sudanese government since independence. Although this offer was later qualified and redefined, it apparently came as a surprise to the United States as well as to

people in the Sudan; no acceptance to Nimeiri's invitation was forthcoming from the American government.

The concept of encirclement was more than just a slogan in the Sudan's foreign policy during this period. It appeared to be a genuine concern based on the perceived hostility not only from the neighboring states of Libya and Ethiopia, but more importantly, from the Soviet Union which was supplying them with advice and equipment. It was not until the Ethiopian Dergue turned to the Soviet Union, and relations between the USSR and the Sudan deteriorated in May 1977, that there began to be talk in Sudanese government circles of encirclement by forces hostile to the Sudanese government.

Policy toward the Superpowers, July 1976 - May 1977

Policy toward the United States started out on a very positive note following President Nimeiri's June 1976 visit to the US, and grew more positive throughout the following eleven months, while Sudanese policy toward the Soviet Union started on a bad note and became progressively worse.

Only a few days after the July 1976 coup/invasion, President Nimeiri made very positive remarks about his trip to the United States, praising American support for Namibian self-determination, and declaring that the Sudan would be happy to provide the United States with chromium ore if Rhodesian resources were no longer available to the United States. He welcomed American investment Sudanese mining ventures and noted that a preliminary agreement had been reached with

⁵⁹⁹ President's Broadcast to the Nation, Cairo Voice of the Arabs, July 12, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 13, 1976, pp. 11-3.

several US banks on opening offices in Khartoum.⁵⁹⁹ In the following month an office was established within the presidency to supervise the development of relations with the United States, which Prime Minister Rashid al Taher noted were growing "in all areas and at all levels."⁶⁰⁰

While the Sudanese government was slow to implicate the Soviet Union in the Libyan-sponsored coup/invasion of July 1976, accusations were made as early as two weeks after the events which implicitly linked the USSR with what had happened. In mid-July President Nimeiri declared that the "tyrant Qadafi had allied himself with the devil" and had "become a tool in the hands of a major power which supplied him with the weapons of coercion."⁶⁰¹ In an August 10 interview, Nimeiri also appeared reluctant to mention the Soviet Union by name:

Behind Colonel Quadafi we think there is another power, it is one of the world powers which is seeking to have influence in the Nile Valley...⁶⁰²

It was not until mid-September 1976 that the President was willing to accuse the Soviet Union by name of having subversive designs on the Sudan. He declared that Libya was merely a tool in the hands of the Soviets, who were seeking to restore their influence in the Arab world in general and in the Sudan in particular. Nimeiri added that he had

⁶⁰⁰ Sudan News Agency announced the establishment of the office in the presidency on August 19. Omdurman Domestic Service, August 19, 1976, cited in FBIS, August 24, 1976, p. 15, and the Prime Minister's remarks were made upon receiving the American charge to congratulate him on his new post. Omdurman Domestic Service, August 18, 1976, cited in FBIS, August 19, 1976, p. 13.

⁶⁰¹ Cairo Voice of the Arabs, July 15, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 16, 1976, pp. D1-4.

⁶⁰² The Guardian, London, August 10, 1976, cited in FBIS August 12, 1976, pp. 13-4.

not wanted to expose the Soviet Union's role in the affair before because he had been waiting for the Soviets to condemn the invasion; now, he claimed, the Soviet Union had openly declared its support for Libya against what it described as reactionary Arab states.⁶⁰³

By October the accusations against the Soviet Union were mounting. President Nimeiri declared the the Sudan would "block the path of communist infiltration in the Red Sea" and it was announced that 150 Sudanese students who had been offered scholarships in the Soviet Union would be sent to Egypt instead.⁶⁰⁴ In November 1976, amid continuing military discussions with Egypt, the United States announced that the Sudan was now eligible to purchase American military equipment, which would, according to President Ford, "strengthen the security of the United States and promote world peace."⁶⁰⁵ In December 1977 the Soviet arms relationship with Ethiopia started, and the Sudan began to include Ethiopia in its accusations against the Libyans and the USSR. On December 26, 1976 President Nimeiri accused Libya, Ethiopia and "other communist forces" of planning to invade the Sudan and setting up border camps for saboteurs.⁶⁰⁶

⁶⁰³ Voice of the Arabs, Cairo, September 14, 1976, cited in FBIS, September 15, 1976, p 13.

⁶⁰⁴ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Ayam, no date, Omdurman Domestic Service, October 15, 1976, cited in FBIS, October 19, 1976, p. 11, and Omdurman Radio, October 23, 1976, cited in Arab Report and Record, October 15-31, 1976.

⁶⁰⁵ Federal Register, November 17, 1976, cited in Arab Report and Record, November 15-31, 1976.

⁶⁰⁶ Omdurman Radio, December 26, 1976, cited in Arab Report and Record, December 15-31, 1976.

Domestic problems and tension with Ethiopia in the beginning of 1977 were to have serious implications for the Sudan's relations with the superpowers. Throughout January and February 1977 the situation within Ethiopia and the relationship between the Sudanese and Ethiopian governments deteriorated into open hostility. The immediate result was yet another defense agreement with Egypt, and public assurances that any aggression against the Sudan would be considered by the Egyptian government as aggression against Egypt itself.⁶⁰⁷ Domestic events in the Sudan added to the air of crisis: incidents of alleged subversion in Northern Darfur province (in late January) and an attempted seizure of Juba airport by other dissident Sudanese (in early February).

The impact of these events on Sudanese relations with the two superpowers was not immediate. Although Nimeiri announced on February 22, 1977 that the United States had informed him that it was ready to conclude military assistance agreements with the Sudan, American military delegations did not begin arriving for another four months.⁶⁰⁸ The Sudanese government was still trying to maintain some relationship with the Soviet Union, in part because the last Soviet shipment of fighter aircraft were due to arrive sometime during the first four months of 1977.⁶⁰⁹ At the end of January 1977 President

⁶⁰⁷ Joint Statement of the Egyptian and Sudanese governments, Voice of the Arabs, Cairo, January 15, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 17, 1976, p. D 9.

⁶⁰⁸ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, February 22, 1977, cited in FBIS, February 25, 1977, p. 12.

⁶⁰⁹ They were, no doubt, the results of the February 1976 military agreement between the Sudan and the USSR. Although there is no published report of this last aircraft shipment, US Defense Department sources indicate that there was one around this time.

Nimeiri described the Sudan's relations with the USSR as "replete with caution and meditation" and said that the Sudan was trying to benefit from the experience of the great powers in all spheres, including the Soviet Union, but that there was a price to be paid for this aid.⁶¹⁰ The presence of a Soviet delegation at the SSU Congress in late January was also noted with pointedly gracious remarks by the President, who thanked Brezhnev for sending the group and noted that the Sudan wanted to develop "relations of friendship and solidarity with the Soviet Union in the interests of peace...liberation and progress."⁶¹¹ In March Cuban Premier Castro visited Ethiopia, highlighting the growing Cuban and Soviet relationship with the Dergue.⁶¹²

In April the hostility between the Sudan and Ethiopia had degenerated to border skirmishes and a spate of accusations and counter-accusations. Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid went to Washington at the beginning of April and within a few days was able to report that the United States had agreed to sell the Sudan military transport aircraft and other equipment; he noted that the acquisition of American equipment was especially important since the Soviet Union had withheld spare parts from the Sudan and Egypt. The Foreign Minister also said that President Sadat, during his recent visit to Washington, had talked to President Carter on behalf of Nimeiri and had outlined the problems with Libya and Ethiopia. Foreign Minister

⁶¹⁰ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, January 30, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 31, 1977, pp. 12-3.

⁶¹¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 28, 1977, cited in FBIS, February 1, 1977, p. 12.

⁶¹² New York Times, March 16, 1977, p. 11.

Mansour Khalid ended by stating that these two nations were conducting subversive activities against the Sudan and Egypt with the support of the Soviet Union and that Libya had been turned into a Soviet arsenal.⁶¹³ Egyptian Vice President Hosni Mubarak visited Khartoum in mid-April to discuss the Ethiopian concentrations on the Sudanese border and reiterated Egyptian support in the case of Ethiopian aggression.⁶¹⁴ At the end of the month Nimeiri accused Libya of airlifting arms for use against the Sudan to Ethiopia on behalf of the Soviet Union, which he called the "new socialist colonialist."⁶¹⁵

In May 1977 relations between the Sudan and the Soviet Union reached their lowest point since July 1971 and public statements of American support were immediately forthcoming. Concern in the Sudan over Soviet involvement in Ethiopia had been mounting for some time, but Mengistu's visit to Moscow in the first week of May 1977, and the agreements he signed there with the USSR increased the gravity of the situation from the Sudanese perspective. The Sudan had tried to maintain at least "normal" relations with the Soviets, and even this latest event might not have led to an open break if there had not been a domestic situation which triggered a dispute between the two nations. A member of the Soviet embassy staff had allegedly been trying to penetrate the Sudanese security services.⁶¹⁶ President

⁶¹³ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, April 14, 1977, cited in FBIS, April 15, 1977, pp. 15-7.

⁶¹⁴ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, April 16, 1977, cited in FBIS April 20, 1977 p. 13.

⁶¹⁵ Agence France Presse, Paris, April 28, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, April 15-30, 1977.

⁶¹⁶ Interview with Mansour Khalid.

Nimeiri and Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid were prepared to handle this quietly if the Soviet Union would simply remove the offender. The Soviets were willing and relations might have remained at this level if senior army commanders had not indicated at this time that they wanted to get rid of the remaining Soviet military advisors.⁶¹⁷ On April 12 the Soviets were informed that the Sudan was terminating the contracts of the ninety Soviet military advisors, who were given seven days to leave the country.⁶¹⁸ On May 22 Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Francis Deng summoned the Soviet Ambassador and informed him that the Sudan wished the Soviet embassy staff to be reduced by half as their number was not in conformity with the current scope of Sudanese-Soviet relations.⁶¹⁹ The USSR responded by withdrawing its ambassador in Khartoum and reducing the size of its embassy there below the level the Sudanese government had requested.⁶²⁰

In the same months as policy toward the Soviet Union reached this low point, President Nimeiri publicly praised the United States for its African policy and its support of Zaire. The United States, citing current threats to the Sudan, promised that it would give "careful consideration" to Sudanese arms requests.⁶²¹ This was the

⁶¹⁷ Interview with Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid.

⁶¹⁸ Sudan News Agency, no date, cited by Middle East News Agency, May 18, 1977, cited in FBIS, May 19, 1977, p. 11.

⁶¹⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, May 22, 1977, in FBIS, May 23, 1977, p. 16.

⁶²⁰ Al Qabas, Kuwait, May 31, 1977, cited by Qatar News Agency, Doha, May 31, 1977, cited in FBIS, May 31, 1977, p. 15.

⁶²¹ New York Times, May 26, 1977, p. 1.

beginning of a long and significant upsurge in relations with the United States and of a very hostile policy of almost one year's duration toward the Soviet Union.

Policy toward the Superpowers, June 1977 - May 1978

Although Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid still tried to preserve at least the appearance of a non-aligned policy (until his dismissal in September 1977), the period was one of extremely poor relations between the Sudan and the USSR. Only in December 1977, after the Sudan had begun to achieve less hostile relations with Libya and Ethiopia, did a lessening of tension between the Sudan and the Soviet Union occur.

Soon after the Soviet advisors had been expelled the President and the Minister of Defense declared that the Sudan was being "encircled" by hostile states linked to offensive Soviet designs:

The Libyan and Ethiopian provocations against the Sudan form part of a wider strategy designed to encircle the Sudan.⁶²²

President Nimeiri referred during his June 1977 visit to China to

attempts by the new socialist imperialist to impose its domination on certain countries...{in Africa}...through its recent moves in Egypt and the Sudan and the attempt to encircle them from various directions, such as Ethiopia...⁶²³

By the end of the summer of 1977, relations between the Sudan and the Soviet Union were still poor. The Soviet cultural center had been closed by the Sudanese government in June and the accusations had continued all summer, including denigrations of past Soviet aid:

⁶²² Arab Report and Record, May 16-30, 1977.

⁶²³ Report from Peking, Al Akhbar, Cairo, June 22, 1977, cited in FBI, June 22, 1977, pp. 11-5.

During their {the Soviet military experts'} seven year presence in Sudan they were an instrument of obstruction and not development. From 1971 up to this moment, the spare parts ordered for the air sector equipment have not arrived. The MIG planes were grounded for lack of oil to operate them and so were ninety-nine percent of the Soviet vehicles, for lack of spare parts...the Soviets insisted on advance payments for spare parts and still they never arrived...the Soviet experts were terminated because, with the breakdown of most of the Soviet equipment, their presence was useless, and also to protect Sudan and its security.... The work of the Soviet military experts ... was not a free gift or voluntary work, but was set against the monthly salary of hundreds of pounds sterling for each expert, not to mention the housing, medical and free insurance benefits. Throughout their seven years' stay...these experts were an instrument of paralysis and in no way an instrument of development...despite their presence forty to sixty percent of the Soviet equipment lay completely idle.⁶²⁴

At the July 1977 OAU summit in Ghana President Nimeiri again blasted the Soviets for intervention in Africa and declared that "foreign bases on African soil will be used against Africa first and last."⁶²⁵ With the relatively moderate influence of Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid gone as of September 1977, criticism of the Soviet Union increased in the fall of 1977.⁶²⁶ Criticism from President

⁶²⁴ President's monthly address to the nation, Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 27, 1977, cited in FBIS, June 28, 1977, pp. 15-6.

⁶²⁵ Monthly address to the Nation, Sudan News Agency, Khartoum, July 18, 1977, cited in FBIS, July 19, 1977, pp. 13-5.

⁶²⁶ The Foreign Minister had continued to talk of non-alignment during this period, but the President no longer seemed to share his views. On August 29, 1977, two weeks before he was dismissed, Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid commented that a strong relationship with the West did not mean that the Sudan had abandoned the principle of neutrality, and that it was still possible for the Sudan to have a bilateral relationship with the Soviet Union. Omdurman Domestic Service, August 26, 1977, cited in FBIS, August 29, 1977, p. 14. Even in May, as the relations with the Soviet Union were reaching their nadir, Mansour Khalid had declared that "the Sudan does not play anyone's game... the unshakable choice of the Sudan is non-alignment." Speech to the People's Assembly, May 12, 1977, Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1977.

Nimeiri centered on Soviet supply of arms to Ethiopia and Libya. Responding to a question in a November 1977 interview as to why he condemned the Soviets for supplying arms to both Ethiopia and Somalia and not the United States for providing weapons to both Egypt and Israel, Nimeiri responded,

We have mentioned it...and repeatedly for the last eight years...But the Americans have started to change this policy and we think it's a good idea to encourage them to continue..."⁶²⁷

This explanation of the Sudan's position was not very convincing as the American arms supply to Egypt and Israel was actually increasing, and the major difference between it and the Soviet arms supply of Ethiopia and Somalia was that the Sudanese government did not view the Arab-Israeli conflict as a threat to the Sudan in the same light as the continuing conflicts within and around Ethiopia.

By the end of November 1977 the policy of the Sudan toward both the Soviet Union's client states, Libya and Ethiopia, was changing significantly. Nimeiri had met with opposition leader Sadeq al Mahdi in July and he had helped to achieve some degree of reconciliation between his Libyan supporters and Nimeiri. Detente with Ethiopia -- although not officially acknowledged until December 19 -- was also underway, having started as early as August with discussions of OAU mediation.⁶²⁸ Policy toward the USSR began to change accordingly. Although criticism of Soviet policy would continue for several months, the first sign of a decrease in Sudanese hostility toward the USSR came with a December 3, 1977 meeting between Foreign Minister Rashid

⁶²⁷ Interview with Nimeiri, no date, L'Espresso, Rome, November 13, 1977, cited in FBIS, November 18, 1977, pp. 18-11.

⁶²⁸ Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1977.

al Taher and the Soviet charge -- reportedly the first meeting between Sudanese and Soviet officials since the crisis of relations in May.⁶²⁹ Although the President would criticize the Soviets on several occasions during the spring of 1978, the attacks were far less frequent than during the summer of 1977. On May 6, 1978 it was reported that, following meetings between the Soviet charge and First Vice President Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, the Sudan and the Soviet Union had agreed to "normalize" their relations and return their ambassadors to Khartoum and Moscow.⁶³⁰ President Nimeiri stated that the Soviet Union had been responsible for the enmity and it was a Soviet initiative which had led to the normalization.⁶³¹ In May 1978 ambassadors were exchanged again and the Soviet ambassador met with Foreign Minister Rashid al Taher to discuss bilateral relations.⁶³²

In this same one year period Sudanese relations with the United States were reaching a very high level. In June 1977, as relations with the Soviet Union were reaching their nadir since 1971, a US Air Force delegation arrived with representatives of Lockheed Corporation to discuss American technical support of the Sudan's aviation needs and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs praised the direction of

⁶²⁹ According to Reuters, cited in Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1977.

⁶³⁰ Iraqi News Agency, May 6, 1978, cited in FBIS, May 8, 1978, p. 17.

⁶³¹ Middle East News Agency, May 6, 1978, cited in FBIS, May 8, 1978, pp. 17-8.

⁶³² Sudan News Agency, May 20, 1978, cited in FBIS, May 22, 1978, p. 15.

⁶³³ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 12, 1977, cited in FBIS, June 13, 1977, p. 18., and Omdurman Domestic Service, June 30, 1977, cited in FBIS July 1, 1977, p. 13.

American Middle East policy under President Carter.⁶³³ By the end of August 1977 two other American delegations had visited, and the formation of a US-Sudan Economic Council had been announced.⁶³⁴ By the end of 1977, the negotiations had succeeded; on December 22, 1977 the United States government announced that the US was willing to sell the Sudan a squadron of twelve F-5 fighter aircraft, valued at \$75-80 million, to be paid by Saudi Arabia, in addition to the six C-130 military transport aircraft sold to the Sudan in the previous April.⁶³⁵

Policy toward the Superpowers, June 1978 - November 1980

From June 1978 until almost the end of 1980, Sudanese relations with the United States were very friendly and growing steadily stronger: there were frequent high-level American visitors, political support of American positions by the Sudan, and an increasing American aid program. Relations with the Soviet Union were "normal" -- the friendliest relations the two nations enjoyed during the entire 1976-1982 period -- but not warm. There continued to be criticism by the Sudanese government of Soviet policy in Ethiopia and Libya, talk of Soviet designs against the Sudan, and criticism of Soviet policies world-wide. There were also, however, a few friendly gestures, significantly lacking since before July 1976. It is not coincidental that Sudanese policy toward Libya and Ethiopia was also far more positive during this period than it had been since before July 1976.

⁶³⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, July 28, 1977, cited in FBIS, July 29, 1977, p. 18, and Omdurman Domestic Service, August 23, 1977, cited in FBIS, August 24, 1977, p. 15.

⁶³⁵ New York Times, cited by Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1977.

There was a growing rapprochement with Mengistu during the entire period and with Qadafi as well, up to a point. The decline in Libyan-Sudanese relations, when it did occur, was over Sudanese support of Egypt rather than the Libyan-Sudanese relationship per se. Warmer relations with the USSR's regional client states made the specter of a Soviet threat rather distant.

There were many high level American visitors between May 1978 and December 1980, including the commander of US Middle East forces (May 1978), Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Duncan (October 1978), Secretary of State Vance (April and October 1978) and several other sub-cabinet level officials.⁶⁶ President Nimeiri also made a ten-day state visit to the United States in September 1978.⁶⁷ American military assistance to the Sudan increased steadily from its inception in 1978, and economic assistance also rose, although not as rapidly. The Sudan supported the United States politically on two key issues: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the taking of American diplomats hostage in Iran. Although the relationship with the United States was very strong, with military assistance as its largest component, on several occasions President Nimeiri made it clear that the Sudan would grant no military facilities to the United States, indeed that no superpower facilities should be established in Africa. Reports in the press in January 1980 that the Sudan would grant the US such facilities was firmly denied in a statement from the Ministry of

⁶⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, May 8, 1978, cited in FBIS, May 9, 1978, p. 16. Omdurman Domestic Service, April 13, 1978, cited in FBIS, April 14, 1978, pp. 14-5. Omdurman Domestic Service, October 19, 1978, cited in FBIS, October 20, 1978, p. 17.

⁶⁷ Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1978.

Foreign Affairs.⁶³⁸ The withdrawal of the Sudanese ambassador from Cairo in February 1980 did not appear to have any effect on Sudanese relations with the United States.

At this time policy toward the Soviet Union reached its warmest point since before the July 1976 coup/invasion, although continued criticism of Soviet policy was mixed with friendly gestures by the Sudan. Criticism included accusations that the USSR intended to subvert Sudanese sovereignty by deploying Soviet and Cuban troops along the Sudan's borders⁶³⁹ and allegations that the USSR trained third-world students at Lumumba University only to send them back home to work against "states seeking freedom and democracy" by infiltrating student groups and trade unions.⁶⁴⁰

Criticism of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan from various organs of the government was swift, though somewhat ambivalent. The SSU issued a ringing call for Soviet withdrawal and for the Muslim nations to "support the Afghan peoples struggle to regain their freedom, independence, and dignity."⁶⁴¹ The same day the Speaker of the Peoples' Assembly

received the Soviet Ambassador, discussed political and economic relations and cultural support given by the Soviet Union to the Sudan ... {and} expressed the Peoples' Assembly's concern about Soviet military intervention in

⁶³⁸ Sudan News Agency, Khartoum, January 25, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 25, 1980, p. 15.

⁶³⁹ Interview with Nimeiri in Al Mustaqbal, published March 17, 1979, cited in Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1979.

⁶⁴⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 10, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 11, 1980, p. 14.

⁶⁴¹ Sudan News Agency, December 31, 1979, cited in FBIS, January 2, 1980, p. 16.

fraternal Afghanistan.⁶⁴²

The next day the Assembly condemned the invasion and denounced any foreign intervention in internal affairs.⁶⁴³ On January 6, 1980 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs called on the Soviet Union to withdraw immediately and the Sudan News Agency reported that secondary school students in Atbara had demonstrated against the Soviet invasion and burned a Soviet flag.⁶⁴⁴ There was no reported statement by the President on this issue.

Despite these criticisms, there remained some manifestations of friendliness toward the Soviet Union and its close allies during this period. Upon receiving a new Soviet Ambassador in February 1979 President Nimeiri remarked cordially, if pointedly:

The Sudanese people have the purest feelings of friendship toward the friendly Soviet people...{I am confident} that the Soviet peoples' determination to make efforts to promote relations between the two countries on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in each others internal affairs will meet with the appropriate response from Sudanese officials.⁶⁴⁵

The Justice Minister of Cuba -- a nation which had often been linked with the Soviet Union in official denunciations of Soviet presence in Ethiopia -- paid a friendly visit to Khartoum in June 1979 and was warmly received by the President, who said that the Sudan was ready to establish diplomatic relations with Cuba and accepted Cuba's

⁶⁴² Omdurman Domestic Service, December 31, 1979, cited in FBIS, January 2, 1980, p. 17.

⁶⁴³ Sudan News Agency, January 1, 1980, cited by Tanjug, Belgrade, January 1, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 2, 1980, p. 16.

⁶⁴⁴ Sudan News Agency, January 6, 1980, and Sudan News Agency, January 5, 1980, both cited in FBIS, January 7, 1980, p. 15.

⁶⁴⁵ Sudan News Agency, February 10, 1979, cited in FBIS, February 15, 1979, p. 18.

invitation to the 1979 non-aligned summit in Havana.⁴⁴⁴ Although the establishment of diplomatic relations did not take place, the warmth of the President's comments was in sharp contrast to later comments on Cuban policy and on the non-aligned meeting in Havana of September 1979.

Policy toward the Superpowers December 1980 - July 1982

The last year and a half of the period under study saw both unique developments and strange contradictions in Sudanese policy toward the superpowers. The relationship with the United States -- and the perceived strategic necessity of that relationship -- intensified to a point never before reached in the independent Sudan. The relationship between the Sudan's policy toward the superpowers and its policy toward their regional clients became very clear following the Libyan intervention in Chad at the end of 1980.

While American involvement in the Sudanese security apparatus and the level of American military supply did not exceed that of the Soviet Union during the 1969-1971 period, Nimeiri's apparent offer of military "facilities" to the United States in March 1981 (however qualified it may have been in later statements) was the most important public demonstration of the level of the Sudan's reliance on the United States as a strategic backstop. Sudanese participation with Egypt and the US in the "Bright Star" military manoeuvres in December 1981 and reports that the two AWACs aircraft dispatched to Egypt were in October 1981 patrolling the border area between Libya and the Sudan were indications as well of the triangularity of the strategic

⁴⁴⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 6, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 7, 1979, p. 14.

relationship among Egypt, the United States and the Sudan. President Nimeiri made it quite clear that the threats which he perceived to be posed to the Sudan during this period by the Soviet Union and its regional clients could only be met by the United States. The return of the Sudanese Ambassador to Cairo, and Sudanese support of the Egyptian position in the Middle East arena since March 1981, appear to have been triggered by the same perceived threat that led Nimeiri to broach the subject of American facilities in the Sudan. The new intimacy with the United States and the return to full support of Egypt (still somewhat isolated in the Arab world) appear to have been based on Nimeiri's renewed concern over Soviet involvement in Libya and Libya's intervention in Chad, and growing worry over the relationship between Libya and Ethiopia.

This period is also characterized by a strangely contradicting statements by the President, who was more critical of the United States than at any time in the previous four years, despite the new intimacy of the relationship between his government and that of the US. Furthermore, despite continuing criticism of Soviet intentions toward the Sudan, and the failure to reach agreement with the USSR on debt rescheduling, there were in March 1982 some signs of Sudanese interest in bilateral rapprochement with the Soviets. The President made several comments during this period which indicated that, despite his dependence upon the United States, he was disillusioned with both superpowers and highly suspicious of their intentions in the region. While his cynicism may have been very well founded, it appeared to be at odds with the nature of his relationship with the United States.

President Nimeiri's distress over the Libyan intervention in Chad was swift and strong, and it was not long before he and other government spokesman were linking the Libyan action to Soviet designs:

The Libyan intervention in Chad could lead to a direct Soviet intervention in the whole region which would definitely threaten the security of Chad's neighbors.⁶⁴⁷

The latest intervention in Chad is not Qadafi's...Obviously the USSR is operating behind Libya...the situation is extremely serious... I have had to regroup my troops along the border⁶⁴⁸

By the end of March 1981 it was clear that the Sudanese government was receiving support not only from Egypt, but also from the United States. Nimeiri welcomed the Reagan Administration's announced plan to increase military aid to Egypt and the Sudan in light of the situation in Chad and, in a Associated Press interview reported by the Sudan News Agency, he offered the United States military facilities in the Sudan in the event of any conflict. SUNA reported that the President said that the USSR's objective was to extend its influence to the Nile basin, with the ultimate aim of infiltrating the oil-rich Gulf area. The Sudan, he said, was ready to give facilities to the US when it felt it was facing a direct threat. He added that he did not object to the acquisition by the US of military bases in the developing countries as long as it did not interfere in the internal affairs of those countries. He explicitly offered "military facilities" to the United States if the US was prepared to build military airfields for the Sudanese army and to use these airfields

⁶⁴⁷ Statement by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohamed Mirghani, Sudan News Agency, January 20, 1981, cited in FBIS, January 22, 1981, p. 15.

⁶⁴⁸ Interview of President Nimeiri in Le Figaro, Paris, February 14-20, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 20, 1981 p. 16-7.

jointly in case of danger.⁶⁴⁹ The reason for this unprecedented offer was given in the early part of the interview. Nimeiri described the Soviet Union's "infiltration in Africa" as a "cancer" and declared that only the United States, as a superpower, could confront such attempts.⁶⁵⁰

The dramatic offer of facilities was no sooner issued than it was qualified in a statement issued by the Sudanese Embassy in Jidda:

Sudan adopts a firm stand of rejecting foreign presence on the African Continent, and therefore rejects establishment of foreign bases on its territory...Sudan has not asked for the establishment of military bases or for granting military facilities to any foreign force. Sudan's request has been confined to military aid for the Sudanese forces...Sudan has made it a condition that all ...aid be allocated to the Sudanese Armed Forces and placed under their control...In the event that Sudan is subjected to aggression by a big power, it is natural for it to seek the help of its friends...{and} logical for Sudan to provide these friends with all the military facilities available to the Sudanese Armed Forces.⁶⁵¹

A statement by the President in a interview two days later made precisely the same points.⁶⁵²

During the same month as the unprecedented offer of military facilities to the United States President Nimeiri made a strange statement about his new ally, suggesting some kind of superpower conspiracy:

⁶⁴⁹ Interview of President Nimeiri by Associated Press, reported by Sudan News Agency, March 16, 1981, cited in FBIS, March 17, 1981, p. Q9.

⁶⁵⁰ ibid.

⁶⁵¹ Ash Sharq al Awsat, London, March 24, 1981, cited in FBIS, March 26, 1981, p. Q5.

⁶⁵² Interview of President Nimeiri in October magazine, Cairo, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, March 28, 1981, cited by FBIS, April 1, 1981, pp. Q6-9.

The Libyan leadership is only an executor of a big strategy which ...is aimed at subjugating the Nile Valley inhabitants...The other danger is that this big strategy is using Libya's oil money potential. I can even say that the United States is benefitting from Libyan oil and does not want a situation different from the existing one, which is serving its interests... The Soviet Union is benefitting from the dollars that come from the US and from trade transactions and arms exports...I believe that Libya is one of the countries that embodies detente between the US and the Soviet Union. Clearly there are no problems between the Americans and the Soviets in Libya. Both are benefitting: the Americans take oil and pay in dollars and the Soviets take dollars and bring arms... there is a certain understanding of some kind of detente between the two sides. Libya might be one of the countries that might have been included in the secret agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States. Maybe what happened in Chad was supposed to have happened in other parts of the world...⁶⁵³

Three months later Nimeiri criticized the United States again, saying that the Americans had promised in 1978 when he was OAU Chairman to make that the year of Namibian independence, but that nothing was happening. He called on the US to adopt a clear policy in Africa and declared that the United States was supporting the racists in Namibia.⁶⁵⁴

It is not the content of President Nimeiri's comments that is odd, but the timing. While American policy in Africa had certainly changed with the new Administration in Washington, the alteration in policy was clear long before this time, the President surely understood the difference in priorities of the Carter and Reagan Administrations, and there had been little or no criticism of general American policy in Africa and the Middle East for the past five years.

⁶⁵³ Interview of President Nimeiri, March 12, 1981, Al Hawadith, London, March 27, 1981, cited in FRIS, March 31, 1981, pp. Q4-10.

⁶⁵⁴ Interview of President Nimeiri, New York Times, cited by Sudan News Agency, July 1, 1981, cited in FRIS, July 2, 1981, pp. Q3-4.

In the fall of 1981 the feeling of insecurity on the part of the Sudanese government -- or the desire to underscore external threat -- was palpable in the streets of Khartoum. Sandbags were stacked outside the gates of the Palace and key ministries, soldiers were set to guard the river bridges, and spot-checking roadblocks were set up on the roads leading into the capital. The events of August through October 1981 were apparently disquieting to the Sudanese leadership. In August 1981 a treaty was signed by Libya, Ethiopia and South Yemen. Throughout September and October the Sudan claimed Libyan bombardment and harassment of Sudanese border areas. And, perhaps most disheartening of all to Nimeiri, his closest ally, Anwar as Sadat, was assassinated in Cairo on October 6, 1981. The sense of panic by the political leadership in Khartoum was illustrated in the vast round-ups of "vagrants" in the capital, random roadblocks within the city checking drivers' licences, and the barrage of television news stories about Libyan threats. Nimeiri met with American officials in Cairo and it was soon announced that, as a result of his talks with Secretary of State Haig, the United States would quickly supply the Sudan "with all its defensive needs", with some of the equipment to be delivered immediately.⁶⁵⁵ Not only were military supplies from the United States to be expedited, but American AWACs dispatched to Egypt were reported to be patrolling the Libyan-Sudanese border area.⁶⁵⁶ It was also confirmed by President Nimeiri that the Egyptian Air Force was helping to keep an eye on the Libyan-Egyptian border regions near

⁶⁵⁵ Sudan News Agency, October 12, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 13, 1981, p. Q8.

⁶⁵⁶ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 18, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 19, 1981, p. D1.

the Sudan.⁶⁵⁷ Nimeiri declared that he was expecting a Libyan invasion of the Sudan, with Soviet support, at any moment⁶⁵⁸ and that he might have to resort to launching a preventive war against Libya to defend his country against imminent Libyan-Soviet attack.⁶⁵⁹

The official line on the Libyan-Ethiopian entente was moderate. The potential threat was noted carefully, but the friendly relations which existed with Mengistu were underlined.⁶⁶⁰ In regard to the threat posed by the triparte pact Nimeiri said:

There is a strategic threat represented by the Soviet Union in the region...the Soviet threat stems from the fact that it creates a reaction. The Soviet presence brings the Americans in. We are then converted -- and the region is converted -- into a US-Soviet operation theater.⁶⁶¹

Despite his apparent distaste for having either of the superpowers drawn into the region, President Nimeiri remarked at the end of October 1981 on American arms supply to the Sudan:

We requested arms two years ago, but Washington said it wanted to make sure first that the development aid given to us was spent correctly. This has been confirmed. We then drew up a joint program to supply us with \$130 million of arms within one year. However, Libya's escalation of the Chad problem ...prompted Washinton to expedite the arms shipments, especially after it had confirmed what we said

⁶⁵⁷ Interview of President Nimeiri, Rose al Yusuf, no date, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, cited in FBIS, October 20, 1981, pp. D8-9.

⁶⁵⁸ Such as in his interview with the New York Times on October 13, 1981, reported by Cairo Domestic Service, October 13, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 13, 1981, p. Q10.

⁶⁵⁹ Cairo Domestic Service, October 13, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 13, 1981, p. Q9.

⁶⁶⁰ Interview of Vice President and Minister for National Security Omer Mohamed Al Tayyib, Al Majallah, London, November 7-13, 1981, cited in FBIS, November 13, 1981, pp. Q3-5.

⁶⁶¹ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Hawadith, London, October 9, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 20, 1981, pp. Q8-11.

about Libyan intentions.⁶⁶²

He added that the Sudan had started to receive from the US such equipment as troops carriers, that tanks were expected soon and that the Americans were helping the Sudan put back into service its MIG fighter aircraft.⁶⁶³

In November 1981 Nimeiri visited the United States, and declared that in his meetings with American officials he found their views were identical to his on all issues.⁶⁶⁴ The intimacy of strategic relations between the United States and the Sudan -- plus Egypt -- was underlined by Sudanese participation in the Bright Star military exercises with Egypt and the United States in December 1981. Despite reports of expedited American arms shipments at the end of 1981 and beginning of 1982, President Nimeiri announced on January 27, following three months of internal and external uproar (over the cabinet and SSU shakeups, dismissal of the First Vice President and twenty-two senior army officers, as well as the allegations of Libyan intents to invade the Sudan from Chad) that the first consignments of American aid had still not been delivered.⁶⁶⁵

In March 1982, after the domestic turmoil had settled down somewhat, there were two meetings between the Soviet ambassador and two Sudanese cabinet ministers and with President Nimeiri. On March 7

⁶⁶² Press Conference, October 29, 1981, Sudan News Agency, October 29, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 30, 1981, pp. Q1-5.

⁶⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁴ Sudan News Agency, November 20, 1981, cited in FBIS, November 20, 1981, pp. Q6-7.

⁶⁶⁵ Middle East News Agency, January 27, 1982, cited in FBIS, January 28, 1982, pp. D19-20.

the Sudan News Agency reported a meeting of the Soviet ambassador with the Minister of Industry, who discussed bilateral cooperation; the ambassador reportedly presented suggestions for various projects in which his government wished to provide assistance.⁶⁶⁶ After having met with the President two days later to mark his upcoming departure for the Soviet Union, the ambassador met with the Minister of Education on March 13 to discuss Sudanese students in the USSR. SUNA noted that the Soviets had granted 150 scholarships that year, in accordance with the agreement of 1967, and that there were over 450 Sudanese students in the Soviet Union in 1980/81.⁶⁶⁷

The tumult of 1981 through February 1982 was followed by a period of calm in internal and external politics. Perhaps because the leadership was engaged in attempting to salvage a chaotic economic situation, and to keep a lid on simmering domestic discontent, there were few statements and little action dealing with policy toward the superpowers between March and July 1982. But this period had surely left questions in the minds of policy-makers in the United States and the Soviet Union. Although Sudanese relations with Libya had become less openly hostile, there were intimations of tensions with Ethiopia, which, though far more ominous than problems with Libya, were not

⁶⁶⁶ Sudan News Agency, March 7, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 9, 1982, p. Q4.

⁶⁶⁷ Sudan News Agency, March 9, cited in FBIS, March 10, 1982, p. Q8. SUNA, March 13, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 16, 1982, p. Q6.

⁶⁶⁸ Strains between Ethiopia and the Sudan since August 1981 were reported in a number of sources, including: Gayle Smith, "Dispatches from the War in Eritrea," Merip Reports (Middle East Research and Information Project), no. 106, June 1982, pp. 27-28. MEED (Middle East Economic Digest), London, 4 June 1982, vol. 36, no. 23, p. 62.

publicized by the Sudanese government.⁶⁶⁸ Although relations with the United States were very close on a military, economic, and personal level, there were indications that the President had become disillusioned with superpower allies in general, and that he might be considering a limited rapprochement with the Soviets on a bilateral level.

Policy Towards Western Europe

Sudanese relations with the nations of Western Europe thrived during the 1976-1982 period. Continuation of the strong historical link with the United Kingdom, the tradition of aid from West Germany, the growing friendship with France, and more active relations with such nations as Spain, characterised Sudanese policy toward Western Europe in the post-1976 period. President Nimeiri remarked in 1981:

Sudan today has special confidence in the European group. This had led to increased cooperation between this group's states and the Sudan. They assist Sudan economically and granted loans, agreed to reschedule debts, some even released Sudan from debts...⁶⁶⁹

The Sudan enjoyed stronger ties with the Western European states not only individually, but also as a group; it was represented at the headquarters of the European Economic Community at the ambassadorial level and developed a good relationship with the organization, both

⁶⁶⁹ Address by President Nimeiri to the Central Committee of the SSU, Sudan News Agency, February 23, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 25, 1981, pp. 13-8.

⁶⁷⁰ EEC President Jenkins visited the Sudan in January 1978 for talks with the President, and Nimeiri met with Jenkins during his visit to Belgium in October 1978 as well. Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1978 and October 1-15, 1978.

through personal visits and as a recipient of EEC aid.⁶⁷⁰ The EEC provided grants of \$410,000 in November 1976 and \$1.3 million in May 1979; during Nimeiri's 1978 visit, agreement was reached on a \$12 million loan from the EEC.⁶⁷¹

United Kingdom

Except for a brief period immediately following the July 1976 coup/invasion, policy toward the United Kingdom was uniformly positive on the political, military, and economic levels. Even the spate of criticism of the UK for allowing Sadeq al Mahdi to visit and hold a press conference after the abortive July 1976 coup was brief and did not appear to seriously affect bilateral relations.

The Sudanese government supported the Anglo-American initiative in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia in a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcoming "all steps conducive to peace ... in a manner that will insure for the African majority the exercise of their right to self-determination."⁶⁷²

Military cooperation was a major component of the warm relations between the two nations during this period. A British military instructor, who had led counter-insurgency operations in Oman and who was described as "one of Britain's leading counter-insurgency experts," was appointed Chief Instructor at the Khartoum Staff College

⁶⁷¹ Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1976, May 1-15, 1979, and October 1-15, 1978.

⁶⁷² Omdurman Domestic Service, October 3, 1976, cited in FBIS, October 5, 1976, pp. 16-7.

⁶⁷³ Observer, London, March 27, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1977.

in March 1977.⁶⁷³ In July of the same year, a British spokesman commented that the U.K. would favorably consider any request from the Sudan for further arms, saying that Britain had supplied arms to the Sudan in the past and would look upon further requests on the same basis.⁶⁷⁴ Joint military exercises were held by Britain and the Sudan in February 1978 in the area around Port Sudan.⁶⁷⁵

The Sudan was the recipient of a large volume of British aid during this period. Grants and loans were made both for development generally and for specific projects, such as: \$7 million for Atbara cement works, \$30 million for purchase of British services and spare parts, another \$30 million for balance of payments support, and \$11.4 million for modernization of Port Sudan.⁶⁷⁶ In January 1978 the British Overseas Development Ministry announced that it would provide \$27 million in development aid to the Sudan in the next three years,⁶⁷⁷ and in July 1978 it announced that previous aid loans to the Sudan, and sixteen other developing countries, would be converted into grants and that interest payments due would be forgiven; future aid would be in the form of grants and would not be tied to the purchase of British goods and services.⁶⁷⁸ British firms continued to play a major role in

⁶⁷⁴ Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1977.

⁶⁷⁵ Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1978.

⁶⁷⁶ Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1978. Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1978. Financial Times, London, November 7, 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1978. On February 1, 1979, according to Sudan News Agency, no date given, cited in Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1979.

⁶⁷⁷ Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1978.

⁶⁷⁸ Announcement by British Overseas Development Minister Judith Grant, Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1978.

Sudanese development projects.

West Germany

The Sudan enjoyed very good relations with West Germany during this period. As was the case historically, the relationship was primarily a matter of German aid, although there was also an arms supply component. President Nimeiri made his first official visit to West Germany in October 1978 and German President Sheel stopped off in Khartoum for a brief visit during the same month.⁶⁷⁹

President Nimeiri noted in April 1977 that West Germany was one of the Western European nations he had approached for weapons and by May 1977 an undisclosed agreement had been reached, covering West German supply of helicopters and other equipment.⁶⁸⁰

West Germany was one of the largest sources of external aid for the Sudan. In April 1978 it was announced that the Federal Republic would grant the Sudan \$57 million for development and infrastructure projects.⁶⁸¹ At the conclusion of President Nimeiri's first visit to Germany in October 1978, agreements were signed providing \$55 million in aid and technical assistance and it was reported at that time that West Germany would write off the Sudan's outstanding debts.⁶⁸² In May 1979 Germany concluded three new agreements with the Sudan, one of

⁶⁷⁹ Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1978.

⁶⁸⁰ UPI, no date, cited in Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1977, and Sudan News Agency, January 21, 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1978.

⁶⁸¹ Sudan News Agency, no date, cited in Arab Report and Record, April 16-30, 1978.

⁶⁸² Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1978.

which cancelled repayment outstanding German loans; the other two provided for another set of loans totalling \$28 million.⁶⁸³

France

The rapid improvement in relations between France and the Sudan which Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid had once predicted took place during the 1976-1982 period, during which a warm and active relationship developed on the military, political, and financial level. The President had just returned from a very cordial first visit to France just before the coup/invasion of July 1976, and so in the 1976-1982 period relations with France started out on a very positive note. A second visit by Nimeiri to France in May 1977, a one-day visit to Khartoum by French President Giscard d'Estaing in May 1979, and the visits exchanged throughout the period by other high-level officials set the tone for a significant upswing in military and financial relations.⁶⁸⁴

An arms relationship began as early as 1977 as President Nimeiri revealed that France was among the four Western European nations he had approached for military assistance.⁶⁸⁵ Following his May 1977

⁶⁸³ Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1979.

⁶⁸⁴ President's Broadcast to the Nation, Cairo Voice of the Arabs, July 12, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 13, 1976, pp. 11-3. Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, and 16-31, 1977. There were also visits exchanged by the French Foreign Minister (August 1977), Sudanese Minister of Presidential Affairs Bahauddin Mohamed Idris (August 1977), the French State Secretary for Foreign Affairs (January 1979), Sudanese Army Commander in Chief Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil (June 1979), Minister of Finance Baddreddin Suleiman (November 1979), the Sudanese Assistant Minister of Defense (September 1980), the French Director of International Relations in the Ministry of Defense (January 1981), and others.

⁶⁸⁵ Televised speech by President Nimeiri, quoted by Agence France Presse, cited in Arab Report and Record, 16-30 April 1977.

visit to France, President Nimeiri reported that France was ready to sell arms to the Sudan and that technicians would meet to determine the weapons to be obtained.⁶⁸⁶ It was reported that the Sudan had ordered ten Puma helicopters, fifteen Mirage fighter-bombers, and several dozen troop transport vehicles, and that the deal would include French training of Sudanese pilots and maintenance of the French equipment.⁶⁸⁷ Another report suggested that the two governments had agreed to share information between their respective intelligence services because of shared concern over events in the Horn of Africa.⁶⁸⁸ It was also reported, in June, that the French arms purchase was being underwritten by grants from the United Arab Emirates.⁶⁸⁹ Arms negotiations continued over the next several years, with arms agreements reportedly signed in November 1977, September 1980, and January 1981.⁶⁹⁰

France also provided the Sudan with development grants and loans.⁶⁹¹ In November 1979 a second economic protocol was signed with

⁶⁸⁶ UPI, May 20, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, May 16-31 1977.

⁶⁸⁷ Financial Times, London, cited in Arab Report and Record, *ibid.*

⁶⁸⁸ Afrique-Asie, May 30, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, *ibid.*

⁶⁸⁹ Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, June 2, 1977, cited in FBIS, June 2, 1977, p. C3.

⁶⁹⁰ Le Monde, April 6, 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1978. Omdurman Domestic Service, September 17, 1980, cited in FBIS, September 19, 1980, p. 13. Sudan News Agency, January 29, 1981, cited in FBIS, January 30, 1981, p. 13.

⁶⁹¹ FF 426 million in 1977 for development projects, a \$21 million credit in 1978 and a \$23 million loan for a joint Franco-British electrification in 1978, and a \$23 million loan for a joint Franco-British project in 1979. Cairo Domestic Service, May 20, 1977, cited in FBIS, May 23, 1977, p. Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1978. Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1979.

France, under which economic aid would increase by sixty percent and would go primarily to increase electrical power output, install pipelines, and pay for imported goods from France.⁶⁹²

There was an important political element to Sudanese relations with France during this period. On numerous occasions, Nimeiri or government spokesmen praised French policy in Africa. The Sudan supported the French policies of assuring self-determination in Djibouti, assisting the government of Zaire against the Shaba province rebellion, and providing both troops and support for the continuing efforts to reconcile the warring factions in Chad.⁶⁹³ There was coordination at the highest level between France and the Sudan on the crises in Lebanon and Chad.⁶⁹⁴ The extent of the political accord between the French and Sudanese governments was underlined by a statement of President Nimeiri in a February 1981 interview with Le Figaro:

France {is} the country of civilization, freedom and equality. We are grateful to it because we have benefitted from its ideas. We defend the same principles...France must play a prominent political and economic role in Africa, and not only French-speaking Africa...When Giscard d'Estaing asked me whether he could grant independence to Djibouti, I said yes -- but only on the condition that he not withdraw all the {French} troops at once. Djibouti is now stable...The French troops in Ndjama {Chad} were also an

⁶⁹² Sudan News Agency, November 19, 1979, cited in FBIS, November 20, 1979, p. 11.

⁶⁹³ President's Broadcast to the Nation, Cairo Voice of the Arabs, July 12, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 13, 1976, pp. 11-3. Statement by the President, Arab Report and Record, May 16-31, 1977. Statement by Sudanese negotiator at the Chadi reconciliation talks Ezzedin Hamid, Arab Report and Record, February 15-28, 1979.

⁶⁹⁴ Interview with unidentified Sudanese official, Al Mustaqbal, June 2, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 7, 1979, pp. 15-7. Cooperation with France in the lengthy Chadi reconciliation process is confirmed an interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

element of stability...The situation {in Chad} is extremely serious. France must be vigilant with us...⁶⁹⁵

The Netherlands and Italy

Sudanese relations with the Netherlands and Italy remained strong. The Netherlands provided a \$7 million grant and a \$5 million long-term loan in December 1976,⁶⁹⁶ and in July 1978 it was announced in the Hague that the Netherlands was waiving repayment of its \$18.6 million in loans to the Sudan (as well as to other developing countries).⁶⁹⁷ In July 1979 it was announced that the Sudan planned to open a resident embassy in the Hague and Madrid

to consolidate its diplomatic representation in those parts of Western Europe where Sudan maintains economic, cultural and technical relations.⁶⁹⁸

Relations with Italy remained good as well. Agreement was reached in November 1980 on debt rescheduling.⁶⁹⁹ President Nimeiri mentioned that Saudi funds were being used to purchase weapons from Italy, but there was no mention of the type of equipment being supplied.⁷⁰⁰ In March 1982 the Italian Deputy Foreign Minister visited Khartoum and agreement was reached on twice yearly meetings of a new joint economic

⁶⁹⁵ Interview with President Nimeiri, Le Figaro, Paris, February 14-20, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 20, 1981, pp. 16-7.

⁶⁹⁶ Middle East Money, December 20, 1976, cited in Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1976.

⁶⁹⁷ Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1978.

⁶⁹⁸ Announcement by the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, Sudan News Agency, July 14, 1979, cited in FBIS, July 17, 1979, p. 15.

⁶⁹⁹ Sudan News Agency, November 28, 1980, cited in FBIS, December 5, 1980, p. 13.

⁷⁰⁰ Press Conference, Sudan News Agency, October 29, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 30, 1981, p. Q1-5.

commission.⁷⁰¹

Spain

Relations with Spain, hitherto very limited, became stronger following President Nimeiri's visit to Madrid in October 1978; agreements on trade, culture and economic/technical cooperation were signed.⁷⁰² The Spanish Foreign Minister reciprocated the visit in January 1979, saying that relations had improved since Nimeiri's visit and that the Spanish government would offer a number of scholarships to Sudanese students.⁷⁰³ In July 1979 it was announced that the Sudan was planning to establish a resident embassy in Madrid.⁷⁰⁴

Belgium and Scandinavia

Relations with Belgium and the Scandinavian countries remained virtually unchanged. President Nimeiri visited Belgium for talks with the King and Prime Minister in October 1978,⁷⁰⁵ and a major construction contract in the Rahad scheme was awarded to a Belgian consortium in 1976.⁷⁰⁶ Denmark, Sweden and Norway provided development loans and Sweden waived repayment of loans to the Sudan in November

⁷⁰¹ Omdurman Domestic Service, March 16, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 18, 1982, p. Q5.

⁷⁰² Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1978.

⁷⁰³ Sudan News Agency, January 8, 1979, cited in FBIS, January 9, 1979, p. 13. 13.

⁷⁰⁴ Sudan News Agency, July 14, 1979, cited in FBIS, July 17, 1979, p. 15.

⁷⁰⁵ Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1978.

⁷⁰⁶ Arab Report and Record, September 1-15, 1976.

⁷⁰⁷ Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1976. Sudan News Agency,

1978.⁷⁰⁷Eastern Europe

The deterioration in relations with the states of Eastern Europe -- other than Romania -- which began in the 1971-1976 period continued through 1982. Although diplomatic relations were retained, there appeared to be very few visits exchanged, no agreements signed and relatively little commerce between the Sudan and the Eastern Europe. There were reports of a single delegation visit during this entire period from each of three countries: East Germany, Hungary, and Poland; and a Sudanese delegation from the Ministry of Irrigation visited Czechoslovakia in 1977.⁷⁰⁸ There were no comments made about relations with these nations by President Nimeiri or any high Sudanese officials published in the press, with the exception of a sharp critique of East German head of state Stoph for sending congratulations to the Communist Party of the Sudan on the occasion of its thirtieth anniversary in September 1976; the East German Ambassador was asked to leave the Sudan.⁷⁰⁹

November 28, 1978, cited in FBIS, November 29, 1978, pp. 17-8; and Omdurman Domestic Service, May 12, 1979, cited in FBIS, May 16, 1979, p. 19.

⁷⁰⁸ The East German Deputy Foreign Minister visited Khartoum in June 1978. Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1978. A Hungarian cultural delegation visited in April 1979, Sudan News Agency, April 24, 1979, cited in FBIS, April 26, 1979, p. 111. A Polish delegation arrived for trade talks in June 1979. Sudan News Agency, June 1, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 6, 1979, p. 17.

⁷⁰⁹ President's Monthly Address, Omdurman Domestic Service, September 14, 1976, cited in FBIS, September 16, 1976, p. 13.

Romania

Policy toward Romania remained very cordial and the relationship continued to be reinforced by official visits and agreements. Romania's apparently unsuccessful attempt to mediate between the Sudan and the Soviet Union following the downturn in Soviet-Sudanese relations in the spring of 1977 did nothing to undermine the relationship between the Sudan and the maverick of the Warsaw Pact.⁷¹⁰ Numerous visits were exchanged during the 1976-1982 period, including a three day visit to the Sudan by Romanian President Ceausescu in April 1979.⁷¹¹ Numerous agreements were signed between the two countries for cooperation in commerce, economics, politics, culture, science, industry, and taxation.⁷¹² A new dimension to the strong Sudanese-Romanian relationship appeared in the spring of 1982. In March 1982 the Sudanese Deputy Defense Minister met with the Romanian ambassador. It was reported that they discussed aspects of military cooperation, and that the ambassador expressed his country's

⁷¹⁰ Nimeiri mentioned that Romania had been among the nations which had tried to mediate between the Sudan and the USSR. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 27, 1977, cited in FBIS, June 28, 1977, p. 15.

⁷¹¹ Sudan News Agency, April 23, 1979, cited in FBIS, April 24, 1979, p. 18.

⁷¹² Agreements were signed: in June 1977 (political, commercial and cultural cooperation protocols) (Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1977) December 1978 (agreements on trade, mutual recognition of university scientific degrees, cooperation in tourism, and scholarship aid) (Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1978) April 1979 (treaty of friendship, loan agreement, a program of cooperation in industry and trade, and agreements on double taxation and cultural activities) (Sudan News Agency, April 23, 1979, cited in FBIS, April 24, 1979, p. 18.) and December 1979 (protocols on politics, economy, and technical cooperation) (Sudan News Agency, December 10, 1979, cited in FBIS, December 11, 1979, p. 16.).

willingness to supply the Sudan with military equipment and spare parts; he invited a Sudanese military delegation to visit Romania.⁷¹³ A month later the Romanian First Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Trade and International Economic Cooperation visited Khartoum, reportedly to discuss strengthening of cooperation in military and economic spheres.⁷¹⁴

Policy toward the Arab World

Overview 1976-1982

Sudanese relations with Egypt have always been the major factor in its relations with the Arab world, but in the period since 1976 Sudanese-Egyptian relations have dominated Sudanese external policy to an extent that one scholar has referred to as the "Finlandization" of Sudanese foreign policy.⁷¹⁵ As Sudanese-Egyptian relations have dominated Khartoum's relations with the rest of the Arab world, Sudanese policy toward Egypt has itself been dominated by concern for regime security. With the government of the Sudan more and more beset with domestic instability and threats from neighboring states, the relationship with Egypt served increasingly as the most important and immediate strategic backstop for Nimeiri.

⁷¹³ Omdurman Domestic Service, March 10, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 11, 1982, p. Q3.

⁷¹⁴ Sudan News Agency, May 20, 1982, cited in FBIS, May 25, 1982, p. Q5.

⁷¹⁵ Mohammed Beshir Hamid, "The Finlandization of Sudan's Foreign Policy: Sudanese-Egyptian relations since the Camp David Accords", September 1981, forthcoming in the Journal of Arab Studies.

Torn between the necessity of Egyptian security back-up following the conflict with Libya in July 1976 and Ethiopia in January 1977, and pressure from the Arab opponents of Sadat's policy toward Israel, the Sudan at first adopted an ambiguous response to Sadat's peace-making, continuing to straddle the growing rift. Pressure from the Arab states grew after the Camp David Accord in September 1978 and the Egypt-Israeli treaty of March 1979, but it was not until good relations had been fully realized with Ethiopia and Libya, and the Ansar fighters in Libya had been returned in May 1979, that Nimeiri was willing to take the relatively unambiguous step of attending the November 1979 Tunis summit of the Arab League in person and deciding to withdraw his ambassador from Cairo in December 1979.

The Sudan was content with its position -- neither breaking diplomatic relations with Egypt nor having an ambassador in Cairo. They enjoyed relatively good relations with most of the Arab world which allowed for major infusions of Arab aid, until a perceived strategic threat from Libyan troops in Chad in March 1981 made Nimeiri return to the safety of following the Egyptian line. When the 1976-1982 period opened, the Sudan enjoyed warm relations with all of the Arab states except Libya; by July 1982 the Sudan virtually shared Egypt's alienation from the Arab world.

The Arab countries most important to the Sudan after Egypt during this period were Saudi Arabia and Libya: the former for its financial support and the latter because of its hostility. Every effort was made by the Sudan to maintain good relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and all efforts by the Sudan to mend the rift between Egypt and

the Arabs in the name of "Arab unity" started with the Saudis. When the Sudan moved away from Egypt in 1979, the Saudis came forward with increased aid, but when the Sudan finally threw its lot entirely with Sadat in March 1981, the Saudis slowed and diminished assistance to the Nimeiri government, but they did not cut relations, as did some of the more "radical" Arab states.

Sudanese-Libyan relations were the one major exception to the rule that the Sudan's relations with Egypt dominated its relations with the other Arab states. Although intimacy between the Sudan and Egypt is deeply rooted historically, Libyan hostility toward the regime in Khartoum was a major factor in pushing Nimeiri to closer to Egypt in 1976 and 1981 even at the cost of his relations with the rest of the Arab world.

Whenever possible within the confines of its relations with Egypt, the Sudan adopted a mainstream position on Arab matters during the 1976-1982 period. It joined the other Arab states, including Egypt, in condemning Israel for designating its capital as Jerusalem, annexing the Golan Heights, bombing the Iraqi nuclear reactor, and invading Lebanon. Support of Iraq in the Iraq-Iran war was an easy position for the Sudan to take both in principle and in practice. Siding with an Arab against a non-Arab state, and taking the side of Iraq, whose supporters in the conflict included Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, Egypt, and Jordan and whose opponents were Syria and the Sudan's nemesis -- Libya -- probably made inter-Arab relations somewhat easier for the Sudan, as for Egypt.

Another divisive issue in inter-Arab politics during this period (although it became even more divisive as an intra-African issue) was the question of the former Spanish Sahara. A conflict originally among Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria over the fate of the former Spanish territory became a bitter quarrel over the admission of the Algerian and Libyan-backed Saharan Democratic Arab Republic (SDAR) to the OAU. The Sudan's position evolved from original support of Morocco's King Hassan, to concurrence with the OAU "Wise Men" committee on self-determination at the Khartoum OAU summit in 1978. By 1981/82 Sudanese efforts to prevent the admission to the OAU of the SDAR were more a matter of isolating Libya and preventing Qadafi's assumption of his one-year chairmanship of the OAU than a policy directed toward the Saharan issue itself.⁷¹⁶

The Sudan's two major attempts at fostering Arab unity during this period were fruitless. As Chairman of the Arab Solidarity Committee, sponsored by the Sudan within the Arab League, Nimeiri traveled all over the Arab world and held meetings in Khartoum in 1978 in an attempt to bridge the gap between Egypt and the other Arabs, but the issue was already too divisive to be amenable to such an approach. A subsequent -- and virtually negligible -- attempt to reconcile Sadat and his critics, mentioned by Nimeiri after he had returned to intimacy with Egypt in March 1981, was certainly doomed before it began as the Sudan had by then lost all credibility as an impartial mediator in inter-Arab affairs.

⁷¹⁶ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

The other major Sudanese initiative to draw Arab states together culminated in the four-power summit in Taiz (North Yemen) in March 1977. Although the conference -- which included the heads of state of the Sudan, Somalia and the two Yemens -- had been in planning since early 1976, the schedule was accelerated by the tensions between the Sudan and Ethiopia in January 1977, and by reports that the Ethiopians were going to permit Soviet bases to be established on the Red Sea.⁷¹⁷ The only result of this conference was a call for a second conference, to include both Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia, but regional events made both the original and the planned follow-up conference moot, as the heads of state of both Yemens were subsequently killed and Somalia turned away from the Soviets and appeared to be ready to offer military facilities to the United States.

Proclaimed confidence in the Arab League, hitherto an axiom of Sudanese foreign policy, diminished sharply after 1976. Shaken by what he perceived to be continued attempts by a fellow League member -- Libya -- to subvert his government, Nimeiri declared in March 1979 that the Sudan might withdraw from the Arab League if it could not stop "Soviet-backed invasion operations."⁷¹⁸ Even though the Sudan was itself moving slowly away from support of Sadat's policies in the spring of 1979, the ouster of Egypt from the Arab League may have presented President Nimeiri with the specter of what could happen to the Sudan if it continued to follow the Egyptian line, and he expressed his loss of confidence in the organization in very clear

⁷¹⁷ Ibid.

⁷¹⁸ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Mustaqbal, March 17, 1979, cited in Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1979.

terms. He declared that he was against decision issued by the old Arab League and called for the establishment of a more positive and efficient organization; furthermore, he indicated that the transfer of the League to Tunis did not serve the Arab cause and that it would be better simply to create a new organization than to transfer the headquarters of the old one.⁷¹⁹

July 1976 - March 1979

The approximately two and one-half years between July 1976 and March 1979 were characterized by intimate relations with Egypt and good relations with all the Arab nations except Libya. Nimeiri's support of Egypt following Sadat's November 1977 Mideast initiative did not prevent the Sudan from continuing to straddle the rift between Egypt and the other Arabs until the bitterness engendered in the Arab world by the March 1979 Egyptian-Israeli treaty finally forced the Sudan to choose between the two sides. Relations with Libya followed a different pattern from relations with the rest of the Arab world. Starting with extremely bitter relations at the beginning of the period, following the July 1976 coup/invasion sponsored by Libya, relations between the two countries improved significantly after Nimeiri's domestic reconciliation with Sadeq al Mahdi in July 1977. By March 1978 diplomatic relations had been re-established and they flourished until March 1979. The "honeymoon", as one Sudanese official called it, between the Sudan and Libya from November 1977 until March 1979 was, however, in no way comparable to the high point of Sudanese-Libyan relations in 1969/70; although he was willing "to

⁷¹⁹ Sudan News Agency, May 18, 1979, cited in FBIS, May 22, 1979, pp. 15-9.

give Qadafi a chance" Nimeiri did not trust him, and repeated Libyan invitations to visit during this period were politely declined.⁷²⁰

The Sudan's immediate response to the Libyan sponsorship of the July 1976 coup/invasion was two-fold: an end to all relations between the Sudan and Libya, and the conclusion of a mutual defense pact with Egypt. The Sudanese response to Libyan involvement was as hostile as it could be, short of war. Not only were all relations severed, but the Libyan leadership was vilified in every way. Qadafi was accused of hatching conspiracies against Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, Uganda, Kenya, and Chad; complaints against Libya were lodged with the United Nations, the OAU and the Arab League, and only withdrawn at the entreaty of other Arab and African nations.⁷²¹

More important was the mutual defense treaty signed with Egypt, and the reports of Egyptian assistance offered during the critical hours of the attempted coup/invasion. Although there were reports of several thousand Egyptian troops in the Sudan in the days following the attempted coup, Sadat himself, as well as the Sudanese government, denied that he had sent any troops other than the 1,500 Sudanese troops which had been stationed along the Suez Canal since 1973.⁷²² Following a visit to Khartoum on July 7 by Egyptian Vice President Hosni Mubarak, Nimeiri visited Egypt on July 13 and two days later the

⁷²⁰ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷²¹ Middle East News Agency, July 14, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 15, 1976, pp. D1-2. Omdurman Domestic Service, July 24, cited in FBIS, July 26, 1976, p 110.

⁷²² As Siyasa, Kuwait, July 21, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 29, 1976, p. D3. Akhbar al Yawm, Cairo, no date, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, July 10, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 12, 1976, pp. D1-8.

mutual defense treaty was signed, establishing both a joint defense council and staff command and declaring that

any armed aggression against either of the two states... shall be considered an aggression against both of them... The two states shall also... coordinate their plans and the methods of improving their armed forces... exchange information and consult each other in the case of an outbreak of war...⁷²³

There was no doubt at all that this new defense agreement between Egypt and the Sudan was a direct result of the attempt by Sudanese dissents to topple Nimeiri with the help of Libya two weeks earlier; no discussion of such a treaty had occurred prior to the coup/invasion.⁷²⁴ Concern for the Sudan's security was on the upswing, both in a military and financial way, as Sadat and Nimeiri flew to Jidda directly after signing the treaty for cordial talks with King Khalid with the intention of intensifying cooperation among the three nations.⁷²⁵

The autumn of 1976 brought meetings of the joint Egyptian-Sudanese defense council and a visit by King Khalid to the Sudan at the end of October.⁷²⁶ Reports of Saudi financing of proposed American arms purchases appeared to be confirmed by President Nimeiri's statements made during the King's visit. He said that Saudi Arabia's support of

⁷²³ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, July 21, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 22, 1976, pp. D1-3.

⁷²⁴ This is universally confirmed by several Foreign Ministry officials, as well as then Presidential Coordinator for Foreign Policy (and former Foreign Minister) Mansour Khalid.

⁷²⁵ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, July 19, 1976, cited in FBIS, July 19, 1976, pp. C3-5.

⁷²⁶ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, September 10, 1976, cited in FBIS, September 10, 1976, pp. D1-2. Omdurman Domestic Service, October 31, 1976, cited in FBIS, November 1, 1976, p. 16.

Sudanese development was greater than that of any state and that Saudi aid included help with the modernization of the army, balance of payments, and development.⁷²⁷ Through the end of 1976 Sudanese relations with all the Arab states but Libya prospered, with a military delegation visiting Jordan in November, and Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Rashid al Taher traveling to both Iraq and Syria in January.

January 1977 brought new evidence of the nature of the security link between President Nimeiri and Sadat. In the wake of a serious deterioration of relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia, to the point of massing troops along the border, the official Egyptian magazine October reported that the Egyptian government had sent a strongly-worded warning to Ethiopia, asserting that any attack on the Sudan would be considered an attack on Egypt.⁷²⁸ At the same time Radio Cairo reported that Egypt and the Sudan had signed yet another joint defense agreement "within the framework of political, economic and military integration...immediately following sharp deterioration in relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia."⁷²⁹

The improvement in relations between Egypt and Syria which had taken place at the end of the previous year had a spill-over effect on the Sudan. In February 1977 Sadat and Assad came to Khartoum and a

⁷²⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, October 31, 1976, cited in FBIS, November 1, 1976, p. 16.

⁷²⁸ October (magazine), June 16, 1977, cited by Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, January 16, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 18, 1977, p. D3.

⁷²⁹ Voice of the Arabs, Cairo, January 15, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 17, 1977, p. D9.

"unified political command" (like that formed in December 1976 by Egypt and Syria) was formed among the three states.⁷³⁰ Nothing, however, ever came of this rhetorical unity, and indeed, it was not really taken seriously in the Sudanese government at the time.⁷³¹

During the spring of 1977 high-level Sudanese contacts with Egypt continued, as well as harsh criticism of Libya, now linked in condemnation with Ethiopia. Good relations with the rest of the Arab world continued to prevail and there was some hope, following the March 1977 Taiz four-power summit, of greater Arab cooperation in the Red Sea region. The Sudan continued to follow the "moderate" line in the Arab world that it had followed in the 1971-1976 period. Statements on Arab-Israeli issues were neither as assertive as in 1969-1971 nor as conciliatory as later on the 1976-1982 period. Stated policy toward the PLO continued to be very supportive but there was little substance to this policy.⁷³² Statements on the Arab-Israeli conflict itself, however, were low-key, such as Nimeiri's July 1977 comment that it would be better to first liberate the West Bank and other occupied territories before talking about their status after liberation.⁷³³

⁷³⁰ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, February 28, 1977, cited in FBIS, March 1, 1977, p A1-5.

⁷³¹ Interview with Foreign Minister Mohamed Mirghani Mubarak.

⁷³² Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷³³ Interview of President Nimeiri with Al Wathba, Abu Dhabi, July 2, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1977.

The early summer of 1977 was uneventful in Sudanese relations with the Arab world, but by July an important shift was in the making. President Nimeiri's July 1977 meeting with domestic opposition leader Sadeq al Mahdi proved to be a major turning point in Sudanese-Libyan relations. Improvement in Sudanese relations with Libya and Ethiopia was one of Sadeq al Mahdi's proposals and he was to play a major role in bringing about a reconciliation between the Sudan and Libya.⁷³⁴ Although most observers believed that Saudi Arabia had been strongly pushing Nimeiri to come to some accord with Sadeq al Mahdi and other traditional party leaders, the initiative for the reconciliation did not come from Saudi Arabia, although they strongly welcomed it.⁷³⁵ Almost immediately after his meeting with Sadeq al Mahdi in Port Sudan, President Nimeiri went to the Saudi Arabia and contacts between the two nations on the highest levels grew.⁷³⁶

Meanwhile, the very poor relations between Egypt and Libya, which had reached a low point with the July 1977 military clashes, had begun to improve and a reconciliation had virtually been consummated by the beginning of November 1977, simultaneously with Libyan-Sudanese rapprochement. Reconciliation between the Sudan and Libya was formally reached in early November during a meeting in Tunis between Foreign Minister Rashid al Taher and the Libyan Foreign Secretary

⁷³⁴ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷³⁵ Interviews with unofficial mediator and initiator of the reconciliation, Khalid Farah, and officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷³⁶ Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1977.

⁷³⁷ Sudan News Agency, no date, cited in Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1977.

after their meeting with the Egyptian Foreign Minister.⁷³⁷ This reconciliation between the Sudan's two Arab neighbors was to die a quick death following Sadat's November 1977 trip to Jerusalem. The Libyans were quick to exploit their growing rapprochement with the Sudan to try to drive a wedge between the Sudan and Egypt.⁷³⁸

Despite the two mutual defense agreements signed between the Sudan and Egypt during the preceding year and a half, and the 1974 integration agreement, all of which mandated consultation, President Sadat of Egypt neither notified nor consulted his Sudanese ally before going to Jerusalem in November 1977.⁷³⁹ Nevertheless, President Nimeiri flew to Cairo immediately upon Sadat's return and declared that the Sudan would "be behind Sadat with our heart and soul in all steps...We are proud of him."⁷⁴⁰

Sudanese support of Sadat's new approach to the Mideast conflict continued through the first part of 1978, and had no apparent effect on warm Sudanese relations with all other Arab nations, including the PLO, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Algeria and South Yemen, all of whom cut diplomatic relations with Egypt. President Nimeiri's praise for Sadat at this point was quite unambiguous:

I am pleased to...congratulate my brother Anwar... on the victory that has been achieved by Brother Anwar's visit to holy Jerusalem...a daring and courageous step...⁷⁴¹

⁷³⁸ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷³⁹ There is unanimous agreement among Sudanese officials on the fact that there was no notification by Sadat of his visit to Jerusalem. Interviews with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷⁴⁰ Sudan News Agency, Arab Report and Record, November 16-30, 1977.

⁷⁴¹ Cairo Domestic Service, November 22, 1977, cited in FBIS, November 23, 1977, p. D1.

Nimeiri declared that Egypt had not signed any separate peace agreement, that the Sadat initiative was not incompatible with the Algiers and Rabat summit resolutions, and that he was drawing up plans to contact Arab heads of state to explain to them the importance of the diplomatic task Sadat had undertaken.⁷⁴² Along with his praise of Sadat's move, Nimeiri made clear his opposition to the reaction of the Arab "Rejection Front":

The total number of martyrs offered by Egypt since the 1940's surpasses the population of some Arab entities who are resorting to outbidding against Egypt...⁷⁴³

He called the outcome of the Rejection Front's Tripoli meeting "ridiculous" and attributing their position to "personal whim", "ambition", or "Soviet influence."⁷⁴⁴ Intimate relations with Egypt continued, with a Sudanese military delegation visiting Cairo at the end of November, and Sadat visiting Khartoum in early January 1978.⁷⁴⁵ During Sadat's visit there was much talk of "full coordination between the two countries, with Sadat commenting in a remark that was probably not meant to be ironic, "I always reach agreement with Brother Jaafar

⁷⁴² Cairo Domestic Service, December 7, 1977, cited in FBIS, December 8, 1977, pp. 12-3. Al Ahram, no date, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, December 11, 1977, cited in FBIS, December 14, 1977, pp. 15-6.

⁷⁴³ Interview of President Nimeiri in Al Musawwar, no date, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, November 30, 1977, cited in FBIS, December 1, 1977, p. 14.

⁷⁴⁴ Presidential Press Conference, January 8, 1978, Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1978. Interview with President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, January 10, 1978, cited in FBIS, January 11, 1978, pp. 16-7.

⁷⁴⁵ Arab Report and Record, November 16-30, 1977 and January 1-15, 1978.

⁷⁴⁶ Cairo Domestic Service, January 8, 1978, cited in FBIS, January 9, 1978, p. 14.

before I make any move."⁷⁴⁶

As close relations with Egypt continued, so also did good relations with the other Arab states. Rapprochement with Libya was well in train by this time and in February First Vice President Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim played a very cordial visit to Tripoli.⁷⁴⁷ Egypt began to ship crude oil to the Sudan as early as February 1978 and meetings of the Sudanese-Egypt integration committee were held in late February.⁷⁴⁸ At the same time, good relations with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states continued, with Nimeiri visiting King Khalid for talks in late February and the Minister of Defense making a ten-day Gulf tour in the beginning of March.⁷⁴⁹ Rapprochement with Libya was consummated with the dispatch of a new Sudanese ambassador to Tripoli in April 1978.⁷⁵⁰

At Sudanese initiative an Arab Solidarity Committee was formed in March 1978, made up of the Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, North Yemen, Jordan, the Secretary-General of the Arab League and the Sudan, with Nimeiri as its chairman. Throughout the spring of 1978 President Nimeiri made contact with all Arab states, visiting most of them himself, under the auspices of this committee and in April its first meeting was held in Khartoum.⁷⁵¹ Although nothing came of this committee or the Sudan's efforts, good relations between the Sudan and all the Arab states continued unabated

⁷⁴⁷ Arab Report and Record, February 1-15, 1978.

⁷⁴⁸ Middle East News Agency, February 18, 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, February 15-28, 1978.

⁷⁴⁹ Arab Report and Record, February 15-28, 1978 and March 1-15, 1978.

⁷⁵⁰ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷⁵¹ Arab Report and Record, April 15-31, 1978, and June 1-15, 1978.

throughout the summer of 1978.

The only clouds on the horizon remained small. The first was an unpublicized ruffle of anger from Morocco over the Sudan's shift to a position supporting Saharan self-determination at the July 1978 Khartoum OAU summit. While Nimeiri himself favored offering firm support to King Hassan of Morocco, Foreign Ministry officials were able to persuade him that support of self-determination and Sudanese participation in an OAU "Wise Man" committee on the matter would be a more appropriately statesmanlike position for the current OAU chairman to take.⁷⁵²

The second intimation of future problems was the quiet rumblings of a problem with Iraq over oil sales to the Sudan. An August 1978 petroleum shortage in Khartoum was the apparent result of low Sudanese foreign currency reserves which had made it impossible to pay for Iraqi oil; in early August, however, Saudi Arabia agreed to provide the Sudan with a year's supply of oil financed by a concessional loan.⁷⁵³ Despite this contretemps, which would become a major irritant only nine months later, good relations continued to prevail with Iraq.

The third troubling indicator came with Nimeiri's August statement that he was going to withdraw the Sudan's six hundred man contingent from the Arab Deterrent Force in Lebanon as he was not satisfied with the actions of the primarily Syrian force.⁷⁵⁴ The Saudis, however,

⁷⁵² Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷⁵³ Financial Times, London, August 8, 1978, cited by Arab Report and Record, August 1-15, 1978.

⁷⁵⁴ Interview of President Nimeiri, As Sayyad, Beirut, August 30, 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, August 15-31, 1978.

were able to persuade Nimeiri to change his mind; following a visit by Prince Fahd, the Sudanese government announced in October 1978 that the Sudanese forces would remain in Lebanon for the time being.⁷⁵⁵

Until September 1978 the Sudan had succeeded in keeping good relations with the Arab world and yet maintaining close support of Sadat's new policy initiative. The signing of the Camp David Accords in September 1978 created a rift between Sadat and his Arab opponents which soon became too wide for the Sudan to bridge, although its first reaction was to try to do so by responding ambiguously to the agreements.

First stating that the Camp David Accords were "an historic attempt to make peace" and then that he had directed SSU Foreign Affairs Committee, the Peoples' Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee and the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry to make "scientific analyses" of the agreements for his perusal, President Nimeiri thereby delayed for almost a month taking a position on this critical issue.⁷⁵⁶

When an official stance was finally announced, it took the peculiar form of a "statement from the presidency", which observers attributed either to major disagreement between the President and the organs entrusted with analysing the Camp David agreements, or to a desire on the part of the President to take personal responsibility for the

⁷⁵⁵ Arab Report and Record, October 16-31, 1978.

⁷⁵⁶ Arab Report and Record, September 15-30, 1978. Omdurman Domestic Service, September 23, 1978, cited in FBIS, September 25, 1978, p. 12.

Sudan's position.⁷⁵⁷ Three days before the position of the Sudan was announced, it was reported that the three units had rejected the Camp David Accords as constituting deviation from Arab unity and resulting in loss of Palestinian rights.⁷⁵⁸

The statement on the accords was a masterpiece of ambiguity. It stressed the historic ties between the Sudan and Egypt, praised Egyptian sacrifices for the Arab cause, and supported the concept of peaceful settlement of the conflict.

In light of the preceding considerations, we do not think we are entitled to criticize Egypt in its effort to achieve a peace treaty that will lead to the withdrawal of the Israeli forces to the...borders of Egypt, as well as to the elimination of the Israeli settlements in the Sinai, within the framework of general principles for a comprehensive settlement in the region.

It noted that peaceful settlement of all issues simultaneously after four wars in thirty years would be an unreasonable expectation and then proceeded to state three reservations with the accords:

We have observed that the framework for general peace... contains ambiguities and cloudiness and disregards a substantial number of questions. This means postponement of

⁷⁵⁷ Mohammed Beshir Hamid, p. 5.

⁷⁵⁸ Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, October 17, cited in FBIS, October 18, 1978, p. 116. There is evidence to suggest that Nimeiri, having ordered the studies, ignored them completely as they did not support the stand he intended to take. Strong criticism of the Camp David Accords was expressed in the reports, according to interviews with officials of the Foreign Ministry and the SSU. This is also confirmed by the President's own comments at a later date when, remarking on the Sudan's position on the Camp David Accords, he noted that some studies which had been presented to him "reflect the Arab stand." Monthly radio broadcast by President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, December 11, 1978, cited in FBIS, December 19, 1978, pp. 113-18. A scheduled joint meeting of the Council of Ministers and the SSU Political Bureau was reportedly not at the time the policy was being adopted, which also tends to confirm the disagreement of the various organizations with the position the President had apparently already decided upon. Mohammed Beshir Hamid, p. 5.

obvious solutions, leaving them to subsequent stages. {Certain issues have been overlooked} such as the issue of Jerusalem...{and certain issues} postponed...such as sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza and the future of the Israeli settlements there, {and some issues have been only vaguely and obscurely formulated} such as the issue of the Palestinian refugees...If the peace steps are to succeed, these issues should be clarified to persuade the other parties to participate ...Despite the ambiguity and other shortcomings, which reveal the Israeli intransigence, it is noteworthy that the Camp David agreement on the general framework for peaceful settlement provides that the negotiations should be based on all the provisions and principles of Security Council Resolution 242...⁷⁵⁹

The statement placed the major share for resolution of the ambiguities and omissions of the agreements on the United States and concluded by reiterating Sudanese support of Arab solidarity.

While most Arab states were very slow to react to the Sudan's position, as one close observer commented,

The Egyptians wasted no time in making political and diplomatic capital out of it... the Egyptian media selected only those passages favorable to Sadat's position, relaying them to the outside world as giving Sudan's stamp of approval to the Camp David Agreements.⁷⁶⁰

The Sudanese government did nothing to clarify publicly its position and adopted a very low profile indeed. It was represented at the November 1978 Baghdad summit -- convened to adopt a unified Arab position on Sadat's actions with regard to Israel -- only by its ambassador in Cairo, who held the rank of Minister of State, but who was far from being politically-potent, or a sufficiently high-ranking representative for the Sudan to send to deal with heads of state.

⁷⁵⁹ Sudan News Agency, October 20, 1978, cited in FBIS, October 20, 1978, pp. 15-7.

⁷⁶⁰ Mohammed Beshir Hamid, p. 6.

Throughout the end of 1978 and during the first three months of 1979, the Sudan continued its ambivalent position, reiterated in December 1978 in the President's monthly broadcast. He said again that the Sudan "stood by the Camp David initiative", noted the arguments pro and con, and declared that the agreements had both "good and bad points."⁷⁶¹ Integration meetings with Egypt, including a joint parliamentary session in Khartoum, continued until March 1979. Although the Arab states did not act publicly, the pressure was beginning to be put on the Sudan in view of the impending outcome of the negotiations between Egypt and Israel.⁷⁶² There began to be broadcasts from both Syria and Libya critical of the Sudan's position. In response to the Syrian broadcasts President Nimeiri decided to withdraw Sudanese soldiers from the Arab League forces in Lebanon because it was

totally unacceptable and unreasonable that Sudanese soldiers should hear Syrian radio and press attacks on Sudan.⁷⁶³

⁷⁶¹ ibid.

⁷⁶² This is confirmed not only by interviews with officials of the Foreign Ministry, who state that the pressure was at all levels, but also by the critical foreign exchange shortage in Khartoum in mid-February 1979 - a shortage which was reliably reported to be due to the failure of Saudi Arabia to pay two installments totalling \$84 million on their concessional balance of payments loan of \$300 million. Some \$200 million of that loan was earmarked for purchasing oil, and the delayed installment payments resulted in long gas lines in the Sudanese capital. Financial Times, London, cited in Arab Report and Record, February 15-28, 1979. At this point, however, the pressure was less intense than that which was to be brought to bear on the Sudan in the period after the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty in March 1979.

⁷⁶³ Sudan News Agency, February 26, 1979, cited in FBIS, February 28, 1979, pp. 15-10.

Radio Tripoli reported domestic political problems in the Sudan, and the Libyan charge in Khartoum was called in by the Minister of Information and reprimanded for the Libyan press' "inaccurate reporting and blatant fabrications."⁷⁶⁴ Despite these signs of strain, however, relations did not really deteriorate at this point, particularly with Libya, with whom the exchange of ambassadors was still planned.

March 1979 - March 1981

The signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in March 1979 was to mark the beginning of a new phase in Sudanese relations with Egypt and the Arab world. It was no longer possible for the Sudan to maintain good relations with the Arab world and even ambivalent support for Sadat's Mideast policy. Although Nimeiri may have thought at first that he could continue to stay in the middle by taking no stated position on the treaty, this was not an option for long. Intense pressure was placed upon the Sudan by the Arab governments, especially Libya and Saudi Arabia, following the signing of the treaty, but it was not until the Libyans finally dismantled the Ansar camps in May 1979 that the Sudan began to move slowly but steadily away from the Egyptian side toward the Arab mainstream. Relations were strained with some of the Arab governments during the spring and summer of 1979 as they were attempting to put maximum pressure on the Sudan.⁷⁶⁵ When Nimeiri finally began to accede to the pressure by leading a delegation to the November 1979 Tunis summit of Arab League,

⁷⁶⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, March 4, 1979, cited in FBIS, March 6, 1979, p. 17.

⁷⁶⁵ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

the die was clearly cast.

The most serious financial pressure was applied by Saudi Arabia but the key factor in the Sudan's change of course was the removal of the threat posed by the Sudanese dissidents still in camps in Libya, despite the fact that Sudanese Ansar leader Sadeq al Mahdi, had asked the Libyans months before to repatriate them.⁷⁶⁶ During the period leading up to the Tunis summit, Libya -- though a leader of the anti-Sadat forces in the Arab world -- actually had warmer relations with the Sudan than many other Arab states, as it was wooing the Sudan to drive a wedge between it and Egypt, using the Ansar camps as the carrot.⁷⁶⁷ These camps were the key to the Sudan's change of policy not only because their dissolution was being offered by Libya as an inducement for the Sudan to loosen its ties with Egypt, but also because the very existence of these camps -- which had produced so potent a threat to the regime in July 1976 -- made it necessary for Nimeiri to keep the Egyptian card to play against Libya. While a slightly sharper line on the Egyptian position had begun to emanate from Khartoum after the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty in March 1979, it was only (and immediately) after the repatriation of the Ansar from Libya that statements from Sudanese officials began to indicate the beginning of a major policy change, ultimately leading up to Nimeiri's attendance at the November 1979 Tunis summit and his decision there to withdraw his ambassador from Cairo in December 1979.

⁷⁶⁶ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷⁶⁷ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

For the one year period to follow, the Sudan's relations with Egypt cooled dramatically, while relations with most other Arab states improved. The Arab split over the Iraq-Iran war made Libya and Syrian opposition to the Sudan's weak condemnation of Sadat almost unimportant, as the Sudan enjoyed close relations with Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, and Iraq. Good neighborly relations with non-Arab Ethiopia also made it easier for the Sudan to bear the growing enmity of Libya without the security of intimacy with Egypt. It was not until the beginning of 1981 that another perceived threat to the security of the regime in Khartoum drove President Nimeiri to abandon his opposition to Egyptian peace-making and fall once again into the arms of Egypt, and Egypt's ally, the United States.

The Sudan offered no response to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of March 1979, nor was there any gesture of opposition to it either, as President Nimeiri struggled to maintain the position between the two sides that the Sudan had managed to keep for so long. But this time the Arab states were prepared not only to exert the maximum pressure on the Sudan to move away from support of Egypt, but apparently also to ostracize the Sudan along with Egypt if the Sudan's position did not change.

The Sudan was not represented at the summit of Arab states opposed to the treaty at the end of March 1979 in Baghdad, and did not explain this until the following month when it became clear that very bad relations had developed between the Sudan and Iraq over the Sudan's stand on Sadat's Mideast initiative and triggered by disagreements in the oil trade between them. It may have been very convenient that

problems with Iraq at this time made non-attendance at the second Baghdad conference necessary, because it would have been almost impossible for the Sudan to have participated without taking a clear stand on the sanctions imposed on Egypt; and the Sudan was clearly not prepared either to impose the sanctions on Egypt or to suffer the ostracism of virtually the entire Arab world.

In his monthly radio address in April, President Nimeiri declared that he had that month cut off all relations with Iraq. Iraq, he said, had resorted to changing the conditions of its oil trade with the Sudan in January 1979, just when the Iranian Revolution was creating an international oil problem. Since then Iraq had required payments in cash and in advance. Not content with that, he said, they also began to delay deliveries as well, until the situation in Sudan had become very difficult, with long gas queues. He noted that Iraq had openly declared it was putting pressure on the Sudan by not supplying it with oil and said an agreement had recently been signed with the Saudis for oil shipments to the Sudan.⁷⁶⁸ Deterioration of relations with Iraq was clearly a direct result of the Sudan's policy toward Egypt and the reconciliation between Nimeiri and Saddam Hussein would also come as a result of Nimeiri's once again casting his lot with the Arab world in Tunis in November 1979.

⁷⁶⁸ Sudan News Agency, April 23, 1979, cited in FBIS, April 24, 1979., pp. 11-8. What is remarkable about this speech is not the accusations against Iraq, but the President's statement that the Sudan had turned from Iran to Iraq for oil "out of fraternal sentiments" to help the Iraqis overcome a "market crisis", after which Iraq had showed its gratitude by changing the terms of the deal at a time when the situation in Iran was creating a world oil shortage. This is most unlikely, as the Sudan had had great trouble with its oil supply, had not paid the Iranians for much of the oil received, and was hardly in a position to do any financial favors to anyone, much less an oil-producing nation.

Although the Sudan was not represented at the second Baghdad summit of March 1979, and made no public statement directly addressing the question of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty, President Nimeiri began in April 1979 to make statements which leaned a bit farther from the Egyptian position than before. In early April Nimeiri stated that the Sudan's support for a peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict did not mean support for a solution which did not return Jerusalem, guarantee the rights of the Palestinians or bring Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands.⁷⁶⁹ He added that he had instructed his ambassador in Washington not to attend the treaty ceremony, and his ambassador in Cairo to absent himself at the time of Begin's visit. He still preferred, he said, to maintain silence on the subject of the treaty itself.⁷⁷⁰ Throughout March and April the Sudan was subject to criticism in the Arab press, and by May the tension between Arab and Egyptian pressure on the Sudan was becoming increasingly obvious. While Iraq, for one, was demanding sanctions against the Sudan for its position, the Sudan continued to refuse to condemn Egypt: the Sudanese delegation walked out of a meeting of Islamic foreign ministers when it adopted a resolution to suspend Egypt.⁷⁷¹ It was at this time that the Sudan voiced severe criticism of the Arab League which had suspended Egypt and moved its headquarters to Tunis.⁷⁷²

⁷⁶⁹ Al Watan, Kuwait, no date, cited by Qatar News Agency, Doha, April 9, 1979, cited in FBIS, April 9, 1979, p. 16.

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁷¹ Arab Report and Record, May 1-15, 1979.

⁷⁷² Sudan News Agency, May 18, 1979, cited in FBIS, May 22, 1979, pp. 14-6.

Though relations between the Sudan and some of the Arab nations were very strained during the two months following the conclusion of the March 1979 Egyptian-Israeli treaty, rapprochement with Libya continued apace, and Libya was applying the maximum amount of leverage on the Sudan by delaying the repatriation of the Ansar fighters from their Libyan camps.⁷⁷³ President Nimeiri was also holding out on the Libyans: knowing that they wanted above all things to see a public change of Sudanese support from Egypt to Libya, he consistently refused the series of invitation from Qadafi to make an official visit to Libya. "He still did not trust Qadafi but was willing to 'give him a chance to prove himself.'"⁷⁷⁴

The turning point of Sudanese policy toward Egypt's peace-making, and therefore toward virtually the whole Arab world, came in May 1979. During that month Sudanese officials supervised the final removal of the Ansar who had remained in their camps in southeastern Libya since the failure of the July 1976 coup/invasion. During a visit to Tripoli by Sudanese Vice President/Foreign Minister Rashid al Taher, a joint communique was signed declaring "the commitment of both parties to the Baghdad summit resolutions" and the "utmost rejection of any agreement that legitimizes the occupation of Palestine and the Arab territories."⁷⁷⁵ Curiously, this joint communique did not specify which Baghdad summit resolutions it endorsed, and was not broadcast in the Sudan.⁷⁷⁶ It was only the first of a series of statements

⁷⁷³ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷⁷⁴ ibid.

⁷⁷⁵ Sudanow, cited by Mohammed Beshir Hamid, p. 10.

⁷⁷⁶ Mohammed Beshir Hamid, p. 10.

illustrating the Sudan's movement away from support of Egypt.

Although relations between the Sudan and Egypt did not appear to diminish materially during the summer of 1979 (for example, the Integration Committee met as planned in July), statements began to appear which strongly implied a negative assessment of the Egyptian position. In a June interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper, Nimeiri called for an Arab summit in Mecca, and proposed that Egypt abandon the peace treaty, in return for which the Arabs should drop the political and economic sanctions against Egypt. He blamed both sides for the widening gap but said that a "prominent reason" for it was an "absence of consultations, and unilaterally-adopted decisions."⁷⁷⁷ Within a few days another statement indicated growing condemnation of Sadat's position:

I cannot, as some Arab countries have, accuse Sadat of treachery. He is an Arab leader who made mistake at a given time. Our duty is to try to undo this mistake and not to make others...we do not totally agree with the Camp David Agreements. We nonetheless consider that they may be good preliminaries to a global settlement...⁷⁷⁸

He concluded that he had told Sadat that his speech in Jerusalem was good but subsequent steps were a serious mistake.⁷⁷⁹

After relations with Egypt had been "normalized" in March 1981, Sudanese officials tried to depict Nimeiri's attendance at the November 1979 Tunis summit as a more routine matter than it was,

⁷⁷⁷ Interview with President Nimeiri, June 3, 1979, Al Siyassa, Kuwait, no date, Kuwait News Agency, June 3, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 6, 1979, pp. 15-7.

⁷⁷⁸ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Mustaqbal, no date, cited by Moroccan Press Agency, Rabat, June 11, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 13, 1979, p. 15.

⁷⁷⁹ ibid.

perhaps hoping to avoid the impression of inconsistency in foreign policy.⁷⁸⁰ In fact Nimeiri's attendance was a matter of considerable hesitation on the part of the President, who only decided to go at the last minute under the most severe pressure from the Arab the most severe pressure from the Arab states.⁷⁸¹ At Tunis Nimeiri met with all the heads of state and PLO Chairman Arafat. Following Saudi mediation at the highest level, President Nimeiri met with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, with whom vile insults had been exchanged over the previous eight months, and they were completely reconciled with one another. Although all the leaders encouraged him to join their ranks, it was the speech of "moderate" Tunisian President Bourguiba which apparently moved President Nimeiri. Before the summit had ended, a reconciliation had been achieved with the Arab mainstream and President Nimeiri had decided to withdraw his ambassador from Cairo.⁷⁸²

Even as the Sudanese ambassador was returning from Cairo, and his Egyptian counterpart quietly leaving Khartoum, statements by Sudanese

⁷⁸⁰ Foreign Minister Mohamed Mirghani called the summit a "regular" summit, unlike the special meetings in Baghdad, and implied that it was therefore a matter of course that the Sudanese President would attend. Interview with Foreign Minister Mohamed Mirghani.

⁷⁸¹ Particularly financial pressure from Saudi Arabia. Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷⁸² Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷⁸³ One example is the denunciation of the treaty and of the Camp David Agreement by the Sudanese Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, who condemned them saying that they had achieved nothing toward regaining the occupied Arab territory and the usurped Palestinian rights. Riyadh Domestic Service, December 21, 1979, cited in FBIS, December 23, 1979, p. 15. Another example, is a statement by the Sudanese Ambassador to Bahrein who said that the Sudan's position on Camp David was "clear", "what has happened recently

officials condemning the Egyptian-Israeli treaty began to appear.⁷⁸³

As Sudanese-Egyptian relations began slowly to cool, the Sudan appeared set to take the next step and sever diplomatic relations. Although cordial official statements were still being exchanged in the first month of 1980,⁷⁸⁴ the centerpiece of Sudanese-Egyptian relations since 1974 -- the grandiose plans for political/economic integration -- was undercut and criticized by Nimeiri, who clearly pointed out the necessity for Arab oil money to underwrite any such projects:

It {integration with Egypt} has achieved little, and what it has achieved is not up to our ambitions and aspirations. On paper everything seems good in theory and in terms of plans, but what matters in implementation...{which} needs funds and Egypt and Sudan don't have enough funds...the committee's plans ... depend on Arab financial aid...{and} Arab investment funds ...have not been forthcoming...⁷⁸⁵

By the end of January, with the exchange of ambassadors between Egypt and Israel imminent, it was announced that the Sudan would not break diplomatic relations with Egypt and President Nimeiri appeared to be wavering again as he noted that the withdrawal of his ambassador was only "a sort of protest" and that he had not spoken at all at the Tunis summit, implying that he had not rejoined the Arab mainstream at that time.⁷⁸⁶ The exchange of ambassadors between Egypt and Israel

cannot be considered a transformation because Khartoum never supported them. All that happened was a change in viewpoint and not a total change in stand..." Gulf News Agency, Manama, December 22, 1979, cited in FBIS, December 28, 1979, p. 13.

⁷⁸⁴ Nimeiri commented that "relations with Egypt are stronger than with a number of Arab states..." The Middle East, London, February 1980, cited by Mohammed Beshir Hamid, p. 10.

⁷⁸⁵ Interview of President Nimeiri in Al Hawadith, London, January 4, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 10, 1980, p. 14.

⁷⁸⁶ President's Press Conference, Omdurman Domestic Service, January 29, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 30, 1980, p. 15.

appears to have stiffened Nimeiri's resolve, however, because in mid-February 1980, although underlining the deep, historical relations between the Sudan and Egypt, he said that the Sudan could not be a party to the Egyptian-Israeli relationship, whether directly or indirectly, and that the Sudan was in agreement with the Arab states in rejecting partial settlements and separate solutions.⁷⁸⁷ The Sudan's position had further hardened by mid-March and the very ambiguous position that the Sudan had originally taken on the Camp David Agreements was re-interpreted as having been opposition to the accords. President Nimeiri's own published statement that the Camp David accords were compatible with the resolutions of the Algiers and Rabat summits was conveniently ignored:

Our stand was clear from the first statement we issued. Though the statement included clear opposition to the Camp David accords, the Arabs understood it to be supporting Egypt. I opposed the Camp David accords since they do not have the three principles we agreed to in Algiers and Rabat.... Consequently the peace which followed the Camp David accords means nothing to us.⁷⁸⁸

By the end of March 1980 the official announcement of the resumption of relations with Iraq had been made, and in the first part of April it was announced that the Sudan had agreed to participate in an Arab summit proposed by Iraq to discuss and approve the charter of pan-Arab action submitted by Iraq to the Arab states.⁷⁸⁹ Before April

⁷⁸⁷ Interview of President Nimeiri with Al Sharg al Awsat, London, February 13, 1980, cited in FBIS, February 20, 1980, pp. 15-12.

⁷⁸⁸ Interview of President Nimeiri on Qatar television on March 19, 1980, cited by Qatar News Agency, Doha, March 20, 1980, cited by FBIS, March 21, 1980, p. 15.

⁷⁸⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, March 19, 1980, cited in FBIS, March 21, 1980, p. 17. Statement by Minister for Presidential Affairs Abu Bakr Osman, Omdurman Domestic Service, April 9, 1980, cited in FBIS, April 10, 1980, pp. 14-5.

was over a nasty war of words had broken out, with the Egyptian press strongly hinting that the Sudan had changed its position for the sake of Arab money.⁷⁹⁰ Curiously, at the time the "Steadfastness Front" was debating a proposal to break diplomatic relations with the Sudan, Somalia and Oman for retaining diplomatic relations with Egypt. Apparently the Sudan's move away from support of Sadat's Mideast policy was not enough for Libya, which was the driving force behind this proposal. Syria joined Libya in its efforts to punish the Sudan and other Arab League members which had not completely broken with Sadat, but Algeria and South Yemen were cool to the idea and the PLO not only vetoed the notion, but was still determined to keep its Khartoum office open.⁷⁹¹

Official visits between Sudanese and Egyptian officials appeared to diminish sharply in 1980, and at the same time Arab financial aid increased, as the Arab states apparently welcomed the Sudan's willingness to move away from supporting Sadat.⁷⁹² The cool policy toward Egypt was easier to carry out as good relations between the Sudan and neighboring Ethiopia were cemented in May 1980 with the visit of Mengistu for the eleventh anniversary of the "May Revolution." It is not unlikely that the good relations prevailing between the Sudan and Ethiopia made the Sudanese feel more comfortable about moving away from Egypt -- their closest strategic ally.

⁷⁹⁰ Al Ahram, Cairo, April 1, 1980 and Akhbar al Yom, Cairo, April 4, 1980, cited by Mohammed Beshir Hamid, p. 12.

⁷⁹¹ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁷⁹² Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

The war between Iran and Iraq which started in mid-1980 was a divisive factor within the Arab world but it was helpful for Egypt and the Sudan. The issue of support for the combatants divided some old rivals within the Arab camp, and forged some new alliances. Libya, Syria, Algeria and the PLO (supporters of Iran) did not even attend the November 1980 Arab summit in Amman. The countries supporting Iraq were precisely those Arab states with which the Sudan was most interested in maintaining good relations -- the Arab states of the Gulf, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Just as the war made it possible for Egypt to quietly improve relations with Iraq by supplying much-needed ammunition, small arms, and spare parts for Iraq's Soviet-made equipment, the conflict also split off from the Arab mainstream the Sudan's most severe critics and thus made the Sudan's position much easier to to maintain. Libyan and Syrian criticism of the Sudan, Somalia and Oman had been building in the months preceding the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war and they might have succeeded in driving the Arab states into a more militant stance against the Sudan but for the fortuitous split within the Arab ranks.

The second half of 1980 witnessed a quiet period in Sudanese-Arab relations. Although the Sudan had cool relations with both Egypt and its most fierce Arab critics -- Libya and Syria -- the Sudan enjoyed diplomatic relations with all the Arab nations and particularly warm ties with Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states.

Efforts by the Sudan to reconcile warring forces within neighboring Chad had been going on for some time,⁷⁹³ and in December 1980 Libyan

⁷⁹³ See section on Africa, below, for discussion of the Chadi reconciliation process.

forces entered Chad at the behest of Chadi president Goukouni -- chief of one of the factions in the chaotic Chadi civil war. This event was to trigger a complete reversal of the Sudan's policy toward Egypt and the Arab world. As long as the Sudan had good relations with Ethiopia and the threat of Ansar moves from Libya had been removed by the dismantling of the camps in southeast Libya, President Nimeiri could tolerate criticism from Libya about the Sudan's continued diplomatic relations with Egypt since there was no hint of a threat to the security of the regime. But once several thousand Libyan troops were stationed near the long, porous Sudanese-Chadi border, Libya could suddenly be imagined to present a viable threat to the Sudanese government.

Nimeiri's initial reaction to the Libyan intervention in Chad was critical but cool; he said in November 1980, without mentioning Libya, that the Chadi problem would only be resolved "if the intervention in Chad's affairs, which reached its peak recently, stops..."⁷⁹⁴ The Lagos conference of December 23, 1980 did nothing to dispell the growing tension between the Sudan and Libya; neither one was represented at the conference by its head of state. By the end of December President Nimeiri had begun to demand immediate Libyan withdrawal from Chad.⁷⁹⁵

⁷⁹⁴ Ukaz, Jidda, November 18, 1980, cited in FBIS, December 4, 1980, pp. 17-9.

⁷⁹⁵ Sudan News Agency, December 31, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 2, 1981, p. 13.

On the surface there was no change in the Sudan's position on Egypt's peace-making; as late as January 2, 1981 the Minister of Information noted "...as is known, the Sudan is against the Camp David accords..."⁷⁹⁶ But a few days into the new year a change was in the making. There were reports of a tense situation along the Sudanese-Chadi border, movements of Sudanese troops up to the border area, and the closing of the border.⁷⁹⁷ There were reports of the resumption of high-level contacts between the Sudan and Egypt in late January to discuss the situation in Chad.⁷⁹⁸

The linkage of domestic and foreign security problems for Nimeiri was illustrated by problems in Darfur Province in December 1980, which were compounded by the Libyan presence in Chad. There were political demonstrations calling for the removal of the provincial governor named by the President and his replacement with a native of Darfur. On January 20, 1981 President Nimeiri asked for his appointee's resignation, with the clear intention of acceding to local wishes in this matter.⁷⁹⁹

The Egyptian government, no doubt delighted to see a chance to underline tensions between its arch-enemy, Qadafi, and its vacillating friend, Nimeiri, lost no time in emphasizing the dangers of the

⁷⁹⁶ Interview with the Minister of Information, Sudan News Agency, January 2, 1981, cited in FBIS, January 5, 1981, p. 18-9.

⁷⁹⁷ Gulf News Agency, Manama, January 5, 1981, cited in FBIS, January 15, 1981, p. 15

⁷⁹⁸ Al Sharg al Awsat, London, January 31, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 4, 1981, p. D2.

⁷⁹⁹ Sudan News Agency, January 20, 1981, cited in FBIS, January 23, 1981, p. 15.

situation for the government in Khartoum. The Egyptian press stressed the danger of a Libyan invasion of the Sudan from Chad, and the Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs said that Egypt was following the movements of Libyan forces in Chad and "if the matter progresses seriously, then we will immediately intervene to defend the Sudan in implementation of Egyptian-Sudanese defense agreement."⁸⁰⁰ Although Qadafi declared that he had no hostile intentions toward the Sudan, and called in the Sudanese ambassador to convey to Nimeiri his affirmation of "fraternal relations", the situation continued to deteriorate, with Nimeiri confirming that Sudanese troops were regrouped along the border with Chad.⁸⁰¹

Although the "normalization" of relations with Egypt did not come until the following month, the Arab states were apparently not unaware of its likely outcome. Although the PLO had maintained good relations with Khartoum despite the deterioration of relations between the Sudan and the PLO's colleagues in the "Steadfastness Front", the Sudanese-PLO relationship cooled precipitously in mid-February 1981. Charged with criticizing the Sudanese government, and "showing disrespect and enmity to authority", the PLO representative in Khartoum, Abu Haytham, and three of his aides, were given twenty-four hours to leave the Sudan. Although the Sudanese government noted that this did not mean a cut in relations with the PLO, PLO leader Arafat angrily rejected

⁸⁰⁰ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, January 2, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 3, 1981, p. D1.

⁸⁰¹ Voice of the Arab Homeland, Tripoli, February 15, 1981, cited in FBIS, January 17, 1981, p. 12. Interview of President Nimeiri, Le Figaro, Paris, February 14-20, cited in FBIS, February 20, 1981, pp. 16-7.

the charges.⁸⁰²

March 1981 - July 1982

In March Libyan troops in Chad were moved near the border with the Sudan.⁸⁰³ Almost immediately President Nimeiri returned to the security of "normal" relations with Egypt, announcing the return of the Sudanese ambassador to Cairo, mentioning for the first time the notion of "military facilities" for the United States, and stating that the Sudan and Egypt had the power to crush any military invasion.⁸⁰⁴ The changes in Sudanese-Arab relations which were effected by this policy were far-reaching and grave. Not content with "normalizing" relations with Egypt, Nimeiri proceeded to underline the intimacy of the relationship in different ways over the succeeding months. The relations of the Sudan with many of the Arab countries would reach their nadir, and only the divisive Arab reaction to the Iraq-Iran war would enable Khartoum to maintain relations with such nations as Iraq and Jordan. Sudanese policy toward Libya and its leader was as hostile as words could make it and the vicious insults traded by the two heads of state were ample evidence of the personalization of power in both nations. While the Sudan was able to maintain relations with such important financial backers as Saudi Arabia and the Gulf oil-producers after March 1981, their financial aid slowed and diminished and high-level contacts between them and the

⁸⁰² Sudan News Agency. February 22, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 23, 1981, pp. 17-8. Voice of Palestine to the Arab World (clandestine), February 27, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 27, 1981, p. A1.

⁸⁰³ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸⁰⁴ Sudan News Agency, March 16, 1981, cited in FBIS, March 17, 1981, p. Q9.

Sudan appeared almost to cease.

If there was any doubt about the reason for the Sudan's change in policy, President Nimeiri explained in a mid-March interview:

We of course have strong, close, historical relations with Egypt...as soon as we felt that there was a danger threatening Egypt and the Sudan we renewed the joint defense pact that was originally concluded among the Arab countries.⁸⁰⁵

Military cooperation began immediately and before the end of March the Egyptian Minister of Defense had stated that there was an Egyptian military mission in the Sudan, that Egypt was supplying the Sudan with much of its arms and ammunition, and that "joint plans and an operational organization ...give...Sudan sufficient security against any possible threat, whether from the eastern front or the western front."⁸⁰⁶

As relations with Egypt were warming, they were cooling with Libya. The Sudanese ambassador to Libya was recalled to Khartoum in March 1981 as if it were a normal diplomatic rotation, although his change of posts was not due until July.⁸⁰⁷ As Nimeiri was preparing to receive Sadat at the Khartoum celebration of the thirteenth anniversary of the "May Revolution", he was simultaneously calling for the overthrow of Qadafi.⁸⁰⁸ Relations with Syria, now Libya's closest

⁸⁰⁵ Interview of President Nimeiri, March 12, 1981, Al Hawadith, London, March 27, 1981, cited in FBIS, March 31, 1981, pp. Q4-10.

⁸⁰⁶ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, March 30, 1981, cited in FBIS, March 30, 1981, p. D2.

⁸⁰⁷ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸⁰⁸ Deutsche Press Agency, Hamburg, May 17, 1981, cited in FBIS, May 21, 1981, p. Q3.

ally in the Arab world, deteriorated at almost the same pace. At almost exactly the same time as Sadat's appearance at the May 25 celebration in Khartoum, Libya severed diplomatic relations and Syria withdrew its ambassador; the Sudan responded in kind.⁸⁰⁹ The insults levelled at Syria were neither as numerous or, ultimately, as threatening as those addressed to Qadafi, but they were certainly serious. While Nimeiri at least once referred in a speech to the "terrorist Alawite regime,"⁸¹⁰ officials expressed "sorrow" rather than anger when Syria joined Libya in the unsuccessful attempt to suspend the Sudan's membership in the Arab League in September 1981.⁸¹¹

As the Libyan presence in Chad continued in the spring and summer of 1981, Sudanese relations with Libya continued to degenerate. In June 1981, following a bombing at the Chadi embassy in Khartoum, President Nimeiri ordered all remaining Libyan diplomats to leave Khartoum within forty-eight hours, suspended all flights to Libya, and closed all Libyan offices in the Sudan.⁸¹² He allowed no Libyans to stay behind, nor any Sudanese diplomats to remain in Tripoli, as the Libyans were willing to allow.⁸¹³

⁸⁰⁹ Review Section, FBIS, May 26, 1981. Sudan News Agency, May 27, 1981, cited in FBIS, May 27, 1981, p. Q2.

⁸¹⁰ This is an insult on two counts, as the use of Alawite implies (correctly) the notion that the ruling group is a small religious minority in Syria.

⁸¹¹ Foreign Minister Mohamed Mirghani Mubarak, Sudan News Agency, September 14, 1981, cited in FBIS, September 15, 1981, p. Q3.

⁸¹² Sudan News Agency, June 26, 1981, cited in FBIS, June 26, 1981, p. Q1.

⁸¹³ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

During Nimeiri's July 1981 visit to Egypt, Sadat offered the Sudan a piece of land on the Mediterranean coast to build a Sudanese port, an offer which was much publicized in the Sudan, greeted by Nimeiri as going "beyond even our ambitions of integration", and treated as a joke in the streets of Khartoum.⁸¹⁴

As policy toward Egypt was reaching this peak of intimacy, relations with the Sudan's key financial backers in the Arabian peninsula and Persian Gulf were quietly slipping. The Saudis made an unusually public and sharp response to Nimeiri's statement during his visit to Egypt that he was planning to mediate between the Arab states and Egypt, starting with the Saudi Kingdom:

If this is true, it would be better for his Excellency President Nimeiri to save himself the trouble of tackling such matters, which were adopted by the Arab League.⁸¹⁵

The events of the late summer and fall of 1981 must have been extremely disquieting to the political leadership in Khartoum: domestic problems including shortages of commodities and a crippling railroad strike; continued front page reports in the Egyptian press about alleged Libyan plans to invade the Sudan; the conclusion in August 1981 of a treaty of friendship and cooperation among Libya, Ethiopia and South Yemen; and the assassination of Anwar al Sadat in

⁸¹⁴ The offer was mentioned more than once on the national television news as well as in the newspapers. Residents of the Three Towns were unimpressed; shopkeepers and intellectuals derided the pointlessness of the Sudan building a port on the Mediterranean when it could not even afford to revive its existing nearby ports on the Red Sea. Quote from President Nimeiri, Cairo Domestic Service, July 24, 1981, cited in FBIS, July 28, 1981, p. Q1.

⁸¹⁵ Saudi Press Agency, Riyadh, July 30, 1981, cited in FBIS, July 31, 1981, p. C1.

October.⁸¹⁶ The murder of Sadat seemed to push Nimeiri over the brink of prudence where his war of words with Qadafi was concerned. While the insults levelled at his Libyan counterpart since the break in relations in May had been no more serious than those of late July 1976, after the death of Sadat insults turned to irresponsible threats. Reiterating his expectation of imminent Libyan attack on the Sudan, Nimeiri said a few days after Sadat's assassination

I shall train a large so-called suicidal army of fedayeen and infantry to penetrate inside his {Qadafi's} country...even if out of the 500 or 600 persons I shall send to Libya only five or two survive, that will be a success. This action shall materialize soon, God willing, in Tripoli and maybe inside the house of al Qadafi...⁸¹⁷

Despite the Sudan's support of the Fahd Plan, financial support from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states was clearly being negatively affected by the Sudan's support of Egypt. During his stay in Cairo for the funeral of Sadat, Nimeiri praised Saudi help, but added

However, recently the military aid began not to diminish but to take a longer time, a much longer time to arrive. There is procrastination in delivering the military aid, and I know the reasons...⁸¹⁸

In this same extraordinary speech in which he vowed to send a suicide squad to Qadafi's house in Tripoli and remarked upon the slowdown of Saudi aid, Nimeiri also reinterpreted his position on the Camp David Accords, for the second time. He said that he "trusted everything in

⁸¹⁶ The American press also displayed impressive -- and unprecedented -- interest in the Sudan, flooding Khartoum with correspondents. Egyptian reports were often based on reports from "informed American sources", such as a front page story in Akbar al Yom, August 28, 1981, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, cited in FBIS, August 31, 1981, p. D5.

⁸¹⁷ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 14, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 16, 1981, p. Q12.

⁸¹⁸ ibid.

the Camp David agreements" and that they were "an opportunity for the Arabs to unite and turn to settling the issue together."⁸¹⁹

Fortunately for the Sudan by this time the Iraq-Iran war -- and Libyan/Syrian support of Iran -- had shattered the consensus forged against the Egyptian-Israeli peace efforts and those who had supported it. The Sudan's support of Iraq, Libya's nasty criticism of Saudi Arabia, and the Saudi's continuing concern for the stability of conservative regimes such as Nimeiri's combined to place a limit on how much the Saudis were willing to push the Sudan toward the Arab mainstream on the Egyptian-Israeli issue.

Relations with Egypt continued to improve throughout the fall and winter of 1981-1982. Egypt aided the Sudan in surveillance of the border areas near Chad,⁸²⁰ and both Egypt and the Sudan participated in the "Bright Star" military maneuvers with the United States in December 1981.⁸²¹ Policy toward Libya and Syria continued to be extremely hostile, with Nimeiri blaming them for the "failure" of the Fez summit,⁸²² and sending a very rough cable to Syrian President Assad following the explosion of a large bomb in Damascus:

⁸¹⁹ ibid.

⁸²⁰ Interview of President Nimeiri, Rose al Yusuf, October 18, 1981, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 18, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 20, 1981, pp. D8-9.

⁸²¹ The object of Sudanese participation was quite clear as the part of the exercise involving Sudanese troops was, according to the U.S. Department of Defense, primarily a matter of tactics to be used against guerilla forces. Maxwell Orme Johnson, The Military as an Instrument of U.S. Policy in Southwest Asia: The Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, 1979-1982. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983). p. 100.

⁸²² Sudan News Agency, December 3, 1981, cited in FBIS. December 4, 1981, p. Q4.

What befell Damascus was the result of your efforts to disregard God's revelation of the Koranic verses and to extend the clouds of doubt in order to extinguish the fire of the Koran and put out the light of Islam.⁸²³

He referred again in late January 1981 to the slowdown of aid from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf:

We cannot deny that until recently we have been receiving aid from the brothers {in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf}. Nevertheless I can see that they are now preoccupied with something else and they have the right and an excuse. However, we don't entirely excuse them...

He urged them to continue their assistance to the Sudan.⁸²⁴ The domestic upheavals of January 1981 in the Sudan, however, may have frightened the Arab oil-producers to some degree, for in February 1982 it was reported that they had assured the Sudan of one year's oil requirements, and that Egypt had also begun to supply the Sudan with oil on a priority basis.⁸²⁵ In an interview in February, President Nimeiri ended his moderate criticism of his erstwhile financial backers, and praised both the Arab Fund and Saudi Arabia for contributing so much to the Sudan's economic situation.⁸²⁶

By March 1982, the Saudi refusal to cut off aid to the Sudan completely had resulted in an escalation of criticism from Qadafi. Saudi Arabia had responded by calling for Libya's expulsion from the Arab League for supporting Iran against Iraq, and Ethiopia against the

⁸²³ Omdurman Domestic Service, December 3, 1981, cited in FBIS, December 9, 1981, p. Q6.

⁸²⁴ Sudan News Agency, January 23, 1982, cited in FBIS, January 25, 1982, p. Q6.

⁸²⁵ Ar Raya, Doha, February 14, 1982, cited in FBIS, February 17, 1982, p. Q8.

⁸²⁶ Interview of President Nimeiri, Arab Times, Kuwait, February 2, 1982, cited in FBIS, February 22, 1982, pp. Q4-6.

Sudan.⁸²⁷

Government officials in the Sudan had been aware since the rupture of diplomatic relations in May 1981 of the revival of training camps in Libya directed against the Sudan, and of the fact that the Libyans were dispatching soldiers and arms to Ethiopia to be used against the Sudan.⁸²⁸ Although the public position on the Libyan-Ethiopian entente was very cool, concern over an escalation of Libyan-financed operations along the Sudanese-Ethiopian border was apparent at the highest levels in Khartoum. In March 1982 President Nimeiri stated that Libya was dispatching arms and explosives directly to the Sudan for terrorist operations; he said the Sudan

cannot confirm that Ethiopia is doing this...but Libya is using Ethiopia's border...we are now in contact with Ethiopia to find out if the Ethiopians know about that ...we do not have any information that Ethiopia is involved.⁸²⁹

By June 1982, the Sudan was enjoying openly warm relations with Iraq, whom it supported politically in its conflict with Iran, and the strongest possible relations with Egypt. Policy toward Libya and Syria remained hostile, and relations with the important Arabian peninsula and Persian Gulf Arab oil producers remained friendly but strained. Relations with Morocco, which was briefly angered over the Sudan's change of position in 1978 in the OAU to support of self-determination for the former Spanish Sahara, were better than with Algeria, which was not only a strong supporter of the admission of the

⁸²⁷ Voice of the Arab Homeland, Tripoli, March 5, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 8, 1982, pp. Q2-6.

⁸²⁸ Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸²⁹ Presidential Press Conference, Sudan News Agency, March 17, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 18, 1982, pp. Q4-5.

Saharan Democratic Arab Republic to the OAU, but also one of the more vehement opponents of the Egyptian position and leaned toward Iran in the Iraq-Iran war.

Policy toward the non-Arab African States

Sudanese policy in Africa from July 1976 through July 1982 continued to emphasize good relations with the neighboring African states whenever possible, interest in playing a mediating role in intra-African disputes (particularly among neighboring and nearby states), and agreement with the African consensus on de-colonization and support for the liberation movements of southern Africa. A concern which had begun to appear in the 1971-1976 period -- opposition to Soviet and Soviet-bloc activities in Africa -- was far greater after 1976, to the point where it became one of the major elements of Sudanese policy. Another element of policy in Africa, which became particularly apparent only after Libyan occupation of Chad, was President Nimeiri's hatred of Libyan leader Qadafi and his efforts to isolate Qadafi in African politics.

Efforts to maintain good relations with the neighboring African states was manifested not only in the consistently good relations with the Western-backed governments of Kenya and Zaire, and the quiet, neighborly relationship with the changing regimes in the Central African Republic, but perhaps even more clearly in the persistent efforts to achieve and maintain good relations with Ethiopia and Uganda -- which were not only plagued with instability during this period, but also very friendly with such Sudanese opponents as the Soviet Union and Libya.

Closely connected with the Sudanese interest in maintaining good relations -- and seeing stability reign -- in neighboring states was the President's interest in playing the role of a mediator in intra-African disputes, especially those among neighboring and nearby states. This interest was not only practical in origin but also based on the President's sense of accomplishment in ending the southern conflict in the southern Sudan and his belief that the lessons learned from that reconciliation could fruitfully be applied elsewhere.⁸³⁰ The Sudanese government was thus involved actively in mediation in a number of African disputes: Ethiopia-Eritrea, Ethiopia-Somalia, Uganda-Tanzania, the Chadi civil war, and the problem of the former Spanish Sahara. Unfortunately in no case was this mediation notably successful, although the lengthy and vexing Chadi reconciliation attempt -- which was marked by a remarkable degree of neutrality toward the various factions during most of the Sudanese initiatives -- came close to success on several occasions.

The traditional Sudanese support for two of the axioms of OAU policy -- decolonization and assistance to the liberation movements in southern Africa -- continued. At the stormy 1978 OAU summit in Khartoum these issues were the only ones that gained universal support from the assembled heads of state.

The potent new ingredient in Sudanese African policy -- hatred of Qadafi -- was to become the major influence determining the Sudan's position in the OAU in 1982 as the organization attempted to deal with

⁸³⁰ This feeling on the part of the President is evident not only from numerous speeches and statement, but also from interviews with officials of the Foreign Ministry, as well as former and present Cabinet ministers.

the divisive question of the admission of the self-proclaimed Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), backed by Algeria, Libya and the African "radical" group (of which the Sudan had once been one). Nimeiri had agreed with with the other members of the "Wise Men Committee" of 1978 on the concept of self-determination for the former Spanish colony, and the Sudan's stand opposing the admission of the self-proclaimed republic was superficially based on the OAU's own previous position. But the more potent, underlying factor was that this was a chance to isolate Qadafi in Africa. The Sudan stood its ground on the inadmissibility of the SADR while the OAU appeared by the end of the summer of 1982 to be on the verge of disintegration over the issue.⁸³¹

Opposition to Soviet activities in Africa -- and the accusations of "socialist imperialism" which were to be levelled at the U.S.S.R. during this period -- were just as vehement as accusations against American and Western imperialism in the 1969-1971 period had been. As in 1969-1971, opposition to superpower "imperialism" in Africa was directed only at the superpower with which the Sudan had poor relations and not at the superpower which was providing the Sudan with military and other assistance.

The Sudan had relatively little high level contact with most of the African states on a bilateral level. Most attention in African policy was devoted to relations with the Sudan's immediate neighbors and to

⁸³¹ One knowledgeable official in the Foreign Ministry commented that the President's current (1982) position on the former Spanish Sahara was "seventy percent an interest in isolating Qadafi and only thirty percent interest in the actual Sahara question." Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

multilateral meetings in the OAU. Other than countries actually contiguous with the Sudan, important bilateral contacts appear to have been maintained only with Somalia, Tanzania, and to a more limited extent, Nigeria. The regimes in Somalia and Tanzania had been considered close friends of the Nimeiri government since 1969, and additionally, each was involved in a war with one of the Sudan's two most important non-Arab neighbors, Ethiopia and Uganda, respectively. Contact with Nigeria was somewhat more limited, although President Obasanjo made a state visit to Khartoum in October 1978,⁸²² and there was active diplomatic intercourse between the two nations over the Chadi reconciliation process.⁸²³

Ethiopia

The strategic importance of Ethiopia to the Sudan was underlined during the 1976-1982 period by the almost constant efforts to achieve or maintain good relations with the Sudan's eastern neighbor despite the growing insecurity of the Nimeiri government. The chaotic situation in Ethiopia and the entire Horn of Africa made it very difficult for the Sudan to adhere continuously to such a policy. Thus the period, characterized chiefly by Sudanese attempts to secure good relations with Ethiopia, was punctuated with tensions and hostilities.

⁸²² At this time an agreement was reached to expand and strengthen bilateral trade, and reference was made to "regular consultations and the welcomed identity of views." Sudan News Agency, October 25, 1978, cited in FBIS, October 26, 1978, p. 14.

⁸²³ Sudanese diplomats involved in the process did not feel that the Nigerian government played a very positive role -- despite its hosting the three conferences in Lagos and two in Kano and providing troops for an African peace-keeping force in war-torn Ndjama -- because "they did not understand the problems of Chad very well." Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

Relations between the two nations began in July 1976 on an uneasy note and degenerated almost to the point of war in January 1977 in the wake of Soviet arms supply to Ethiopia and escalated Ethiopian military operations against Eritrean forces in December 1976. As with Libya, the Sudanese perceived that Soviet hostility would accentuate Ethiopian tensions with the Sudan and that the Soviet Union would use Ethiopia to carry out its own designs on the Sudan. The threat was greatly diminished as the Sudan and Ethiopia negotiated a rapprochement starting at the end of 1977, and relations between them improved slowly over a period of the next two and a half years, beginning in December 1977.

The high point of relations between the two nations came with the exchange of cordial visits by Mengistu and Nimeiri in 1980. It was not until after the conclusion of the Libyan-Ethiopian-South Yemen pact in August 1981 that the combination of Libyan money and hostility along the vulnerable Sudanese-Ethiopian border with the nearby Sudanese hydroelectric facilities raised in Khartoum the possibility of direct danger from Ethiopia. Even then, President Nimeiri chose to project an image of studied confidence in the friendship of the Dergue. However, from September 1981 until the end of the period under study, there were reports of border incidents and the statements of Sudanese officials reflected a reserve which had not existed in the friendly months of 1980 and the first nine months of 1981.

July 1976 - November 1977

From July 1976 until the end of December 1976 relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia were uneasy but not actually hostile. Relations

between the Sudan and Libya were extremely bad and the Sudan did not want tense relations with both Libya and Ethiopia at the same time.⁸³⁴ The Sudanese effort to avoid acrimonious relations with Ethiopia is amply illustrated in the failure to make any direct accusations against the Dergue after the July 1976 coup/invasion despite the fact that they had evidence of Ethiopian involvement.⁸³⁵ Unlike the policy adopted toward Libyan participation (which was much greater than that of Ethiopia), the Sudan not only made no accusations against Ethiopia but actually received a high-level Ethiopian delegation in early August to discuss on-going Sudanese efforts to mediate in the Ethiopian civil war.⁸³⁶ Sudanese official contacts with Eritrean groups continued unabated through August in an effort to bring about Ethiopian-Eritrean negotiations.⁸³⁷ It was only at the end of December 1976, after Ethiopia had begun to receive some Soviet assistance and to escalate its operations against Eritrean forces near the Sudanese border, that the uneasy relationship deteriorated into sharp

⁸³⁴ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸³⁵ Ethiopian involvement was very lightly touched upon by Sudanese officials. First Vice President Mohamed Baqir said on July 10 that 216 'infiltrators' who had been arrested in western Sudan admitted that they had been trained in Mahdist camps in Ethiopia. President Nimeiri also alleged that 'mercenaries' from Ethiopia, Mali, Chad and Zanzibar had taken part. The Ethiopian Ministry of Information denied this allegation. Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1976.

⁸³⁶ The delegation was led by a member of the Provisional Military Council (the Dergue). Talks were held on August 3 and the Ethiopians left thanking Nimeiri for his efforts to bring about negotiations. Omdurman Radio, August 3, 1976, cited in Arab Report and Record, August 1015, 1976.

⁸³⁷ Sudan News Agency, no date, cited by Omdurman Domestic Service, August 17, 1976, cited in FBIS, August 19, 1976, p. 16.

⁸³⁸ The New York Times reported in April 1977 that the Soviets had

hostility.⁸³⁸

Stepped-up Ethiopian military operations against the Eritreans near the border were interpreted in Khartoum as an attempt to put pressure on the Sudan to support the Ethiopian government in the civil war:

We had been trying to keep a delicate balance {between relations with the Ethiopian government and with the Eritrean groups} when the Ethiopians decided to push the balance in their favor ... showing the Sudan just how threatening the situation could be, making it costly for the Sudan and therefore pushing the Sudan to end the situation {the Ethiopian civil war} as soon as possible to mitigate damage to the Sudan...⁸³⁹

The open hostility between the Sudan and Ethiopia -- which was to last for a full year -- began with a statement by President Nimeiri on December 26, 1976 that Libya, Ethiopia and "other communist forces" were planning to invade the Sudan and were setting up border camps to train saboteurs.⁸⁴⁰ Ethiopia's reply was a swift denial and a counter-accusation that Nimeiri's comments were

aimed solely at diverting attention from the hostile activities of elements ... opposed to Ethiopia's revolution ... who use Sudan, with the Sudanese Government's full knowledge, as the base for their activities...⁸⁴¹

In January 1977 relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia reached their nadir. As Ethiopia suffered serious reverses in its operations against Eritrean forces, a storm of accusations and counter-accusations flew between Khartoum and Addis Ababa. President Nimeiri

_____ began supplying Ethiopia with arms the previous December. New York Times, April 26, 1977, p. 4.

⁸³⁹ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸⁴⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, December 26, 1976, cited in FBIS, December 29, 1976, p. 12.

⁸⁴¹ Addis Ababa Radio, December 29, 1976, cited in Arab Report and Record, December 16-31, 1976.

repeated his accusations of Ethiopian complicity in plots by Sudanese dissidents against his government, and charged that "the Ethiopian ruling clique" had "massacred Sudanese, Ethiopian and Eritrean civilians, including women and children."⁸⁴² He complained that Sudanese diplomats and officials were mistreated in Addis Ababa and called for the removal of OAU headquarters to another site.⁸⁴³ In what appeared to be a not too subtle threat, President Nimeiri noted that the presence of over 100,000 Ethiopians and 40,000 Eritrean refugees in the Sudan could have been used to cause problems for Ethiopia, but that the Sudan had not done so. He proclaimed continuing Sudanese support for the "fraternal Eritrean people" but also mentioned Sudanese support for the OAU Charter, presumably referring to the policy of non-interference.⁸⁴⁴ Within the same week both countries recalled their ambassadors and there were reports of Sudanese troops on alert along the long border between the two states.⁸⁴⁵

The Egyptian government was fueling Sudanese fear of Soviet involvement in Ethiopia and did nothing to diminish the tensions.⁸⁴⁶ On January 15, 1977, the Sudan signed yet another mutual defense

⁸⁴² Omdurman Radio, January 1, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1977.

⁸⁴³ ibid.

⁸⁴⁴ Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of Sudanese Independence, Omdurman Domestic Service, January 1, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 3, 1977, pp. 11-3.

⁸⁴⁵ Reuter, January 5, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1977. Agence France Presse, Paris, January 2, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 3, 1977, p. 13.

⁸⁴⁶ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸⁴⁷ Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1977.

agreement with Egypt in response to the tensions with Ethiopia.⁸⁴⁷ The reassurance of Egyptian support may have encouraged Nimeiri to feel that he could respond to Ethiopian provocations with impunity, for less than two weeks after the Egyptian-Sudanese defense agreement was signed he had taken the extraordinary step of contradicting his own -- as well as previous regimes' -- axiom of policy toward the Ethiopian civil war. On January 30, 1977 President Nimeiri said that although he had always favored a peaceful solution to the Eritrean problem, "the inhuman acts being carried out by the military regime in Addis Ababa" had caused him to change his mind and he pledged Sudanese support for Eritrean independence.⁸⁴⁸

While both Ethiopia and the Sudan were undoubtedly using the tensions between them to underline their need for outside assistance (in the case of the Sudan, from Egypt and the United States), there appeared to be a genuine threat of armed conflict until at least July 1977. The chaos in Ethiopia -- including the execution of Derge leader Terefe Bante and six other high officials in February 1977 and the raging civil conflict which propelled tens of thousands of refugees into the Sudan in the same month -- appeared to have been the major element raising tensions between the two, but the accusations which were exchanged went far beyond. Although Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid and other officials were cautious in the terminology of their comments, President Nimeiri went even beyond his statement of support for Eritrean independence, insulting Mengistu personally, linking Ethiopian "conspiracies" with Israel, charging Ethiopia with

⁸⁴⁸ Agence France Presse, Paris, January 30, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 31, 1977, p. 12.

subversive activities in southern Sudan, and accusing the Dergue of crimes including the liquidation of moderate elements and the extermination of whole segments of the population.⁸⁴⁹ Indeed, it is quite certain that President Nimeiri's broadside on Eritrean independence at the end of January 1977 had been solely his own initiative, and it was considered most unfortunate by the Foreign Minister and his staff, who felt it was no more than personal pique over Ethiopian provocations and meant no real change in Sudanese policy.⁸⁵⁰

The question of whether or not the newly-articulated "support for Eritrean independence" represented a change of policy for the Sudan is complex. While the Sudan had used support of the Eritrean groups as a tool to deal with Ethiopia off and on for many years, the Sudan had never actually supported independence for Eritrea either in theory or practice: aid to the Eritreans had waxed and waned according to the amount of pressure the Sudanese government wished to place on Ethiopia

⁸⁴⁹ The insults included such appellations as "dwarf", and on numerous occasions during this period, Nimeiri referred to Mengistu as "the Abyssinian", which Ethiopians known well as a Sudanese insult implying, for an Ethiopian man, that he is a thief and a rogue. For example, see Monthly Address of the President, Omdurman Domestic Service, May 1, 1977, cited in FBIS, May 2, 1977, p. 19. The Sudan News Agency claimed it had evidence showing collusion between the "fascist military regime in Abyssinia" and Israel in southern Sudan. Omdurman Domestic Service, February 22, 1977, cited in FBIS, February 28, 1977, p. 14. In an interview Nimeiri referred, among other accusations, to the "liquidation of the moderate elements" leading "the extremists to exercise more coercion against the Eritrean people." Al Hawadith, April 28, 1977, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, April 28, 1977, cited in FBIS, April 29, 1977, pp. 15-7.

⁸⁵⁰ Interview with Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, and other officials of the Foreign Ministry. All interviews with Foreign Ministry officials resulted in the same view of the President's statement: it was the result of provocation and it signaled no real change in Sudanese policy toward the conflict.

to induce the government in Addis Ababa to diminish support for Sudanese dissidents. The support given to the Eritrean groups in the Sudan following Nimeiri's proclamation of support for Eritrean independence probably did not exceed that given to them covertly at other periods, but the inflammatory nature of the President's stated policy certainly did not help to move the two nations toward the rapprochement which both of them needed.

The hostilities of December 1976 through November 1977 also included border clashes, mutual accusations of aggression, and recriminations based on Egyptian/American support of the Sudan, and Libyan/Soviet support of Ethiopia.⁸⁵¹ The Sudan responded to the situation not only with its second mutual defense agreement with Egypt in mid-January 1977, but also with an attempt to "contain" Ethiopia within the Red Sea region by creating an organization of Arab states bordering the Red Sea begun with the Taiz summit of March 1977.⁸⁵²

Mention of Eritrean independence, and other manifestations of hostility toward Ethiopia, continued until November 1977, although as early as the previous July there had been signs that the Sudan was interested in rapprochement. Nimeiri scoffed at the inauguration of OAU efforts, to reconcile the Sudan and Ethiopia, saying that this was "of no significance to the Sudan", but at the same time he said that Sudanese-Ethiopian relations would improve if Ethiopia "regained

⁸⁵¹ Arab Report and Record, April 1-15, 1977, and April 16-30, 1977.

⁸⁵² The Taiz summit, while specifically aimed, as far as the Sudan was concerned, at "containment of Ethiopia", ended only with the conclusion that further summits should be convened, and might include other riparian countries. Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

control of its affairs" by loosening its ties with the Soviet Union.⁸⁵³ The remainder of the summer and fall of 1977 saw heightened conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia over the Ogaden, on-going OAU efforts to reconcile Ethiopia with the Sudan, and continued Sudanese efforts to bring together the fragmented Eritrean groups.⁸⁵⁴ Sudanese officials also continued to caucus with Arab states of the Red Sea area.⁸⁵⁵

President Nimeiri took a step toward rapprochement with Ethiopia in October 1977. In a statement deploring Soviet military "interference" in Africa, and warning of possible Soviet/Ethiopian occupation of Somalia, he declared that the Sudan was "prepared to act to end the bloody confrontation of Eritrea and Ethiopia and to arrange a dialogue."⁸⁵⁶ Another hopeful sign was the reported visit to Ethiopia of Sadeq al Mahdi, now reconciled with Nimeiri and playing a major

⁸⁵³ A committee made up of the heads of state of Zambia, Sierra Leone, Algeria, Senegal, Zaire, Camerouns, and Gabon was established at the July 1977 OAU summit in Gabon. Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1977. Sudan News Agency, July 6, 1977, cited in FBIS, July 6, 1977, pp. 13-4. Al Wathbah, Abu Dhabi, July 2, 1977, cited by Qatar News Agency, Doha, July 2, 1977, cited in FBIS, July 8, 1977, p. 13.

⁸⁵⁴ Statement by Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid on OAU efforts to convene the committee to reconcile the Sudan and Ethiopia, Omdurman Domestic Service, August 31, 1977, cited in FBIS, September 1, 1977, p. 18. At the same time, newly-appointed First Vice President Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim was working actively in Khartoum to organize a meeting of the various Eritrean groups. Agence France Presse, Paris, September 9, 1977, cited in FBIS, September 7, 1977, pp. 19-10.

⁸⁵⁵ Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid held meetings with the Foreign Ministers of North Yemen and Somalia, and with the South Yemeni Ambassador to Egypt, while attending the Arab League Council meeting in Cairo from 3-6 September. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, cited in Arab Report and Record, September 1-15, 1977.

⁸⁵⁶ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 12, 1977, cited in FBIS, October 13, 1977, pp. 12-3.

role in the Sudanese reconciliation with Libya.⁸⁵⁷

Sudanese-Ethiopian relations appeared to improve in the wake of Nimeiri's offer to arrange an Eritrean-Ethiopian dialogue,⁸⁵⁸ although harsh criticism continued for another month. Only two days after offering his good offices for mediation in the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict, Nimeiri referred in a statement to the People's Assembly to "Abbyssinia ... annexing Eritrea by force," said the Ogaden problem was similar to that of Ethiopia, and urged Arab and African states to provide arms to the Eritreans to counter the influx of Soviet arms to Ethiopia.⁸⁵⁹ He waved a red flag in front of Ethiopia by stressing the Sudan's desire to see the Red Sea "continue to be an Arab lake of peace."⁸⁶⁰

The execution of Ethiopian Derge Vice Chairman Atnafe Abate on November 12, labelled by the Ethiopian government "a reactionary follower of the Sudanese ruling class,"⁸⁶¹ looked as though it would set off another round of hostilities, but the Sudanese government

⁸⁵⁷ Arab Report and Record, October 16-31, 1977. Close observers in the Foreign Ministry, however, do not believe that Sadeq played a role in Ethiopian-Sudanese reconciliation as he did in relations between the Sudan and Libya.

⁸⁵⁸ He claimed that Ethiopia had responded positively, though unofficially. Joint interview of Presidents Sadat and Nimeiri, Cairo Domestic Service, October 25, 1977, cited in FBIS, October 26, 1977, pp. D2-4.

⁸⁵⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, October 28, 1977, cited in FBIS, November 1, 1977, pp. 15-6.

⁸⁶⁰ ibid. The concept of the Red Sea as an "Arab lake" was abhorant to Mengistu, of course, who had been talking of resistance to such a plan by the Arabs since at least March of 1977. New York Times, March 16, 1977, p. 11.

⁸⁶¹ Arab Report and Record, November 16-30, 1977.

persevered in its efforts to reconcile itself with the Dergue, and to mediate between it and the Eritrean groups. Sudanese Minister of Defense General Bashir Mohamed Ali confirmed on November 16 that the Sudan had renewed its initiative for a dialogue between the two, and shortly thereafter President Nimeiri appealed to Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia to solve their conflicts through negotiation.⁸⁶² At the same time he began referring again to Eritrean "self-determination" rather than the "independence" to be achieved by military means which he had supported in January and succeeding months.⁸⁶³ Asked in an interview in mid-November 1977 about the disappearance of support for "Eritrean independence" from his public pronouncements and whether his position had changed, Nimeiri responded in a more conciliatory tone than at any time since 1976

As for Ethiopia and Eritrea, we are prepared to help them find a solution...I have already suggested that they sit down at a table without preconditions...Nevertheless, I reassert that Eritrea must have the right to self-determination or independence. It is for the Eritreans to decide whether to have some kind of link with Ethiopia or straightforward independence. But it is a political and not a military problem...

Asked if he was still concerned about armed conflict with Ethiopia, he replied:

{it} is not a real possibility. If Ethiopia were to open up another front, it would fall apart. And we do not want our neighbors to fall apart... We are not supplying arms or money to the Eritreans because we don't have any to give. We are simply helping them to survive: east Sudan is feeding half of Eritrea...⁸⁶⁴

⁸⁶² Sudan News Agency, November 16, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, November 16-30, 1977. Al Ayyam, Khartoum, November 18, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, November 16-30, 1977.

⁸⁶³ Monthly broadcast to the nation, Omdurman Domestic Service, November 14, 1977, cited in FBI S, November 17, 1977, pp.16-7.

⁸⁶⁴ Interview with President Nimeiri, L'Espresso, Rome, November 13,

Joint military maneuvers with Egypt on the eastern borders of the Sudan, described by the Sudanese Minister of Defense as "the biggest military maneuvers in the history of the Sudanese forces," may have been helpful in illustrating to Mengistu the usefulness of rapprochement with the Sudan.⁸⁶⁵

December 1977 - August 1981

The period from December 1977 through August 1981 saw the lengthy process of rapprochement between the Sudan and Ethiopia finally crowned with success in 1980 with the exchange of visits by Mengistu and Nimeiri in May and November, respectively. The need for each to achieve good relations with the other was clear. Ethiopia was still fighting a sporadic war with Somalia on its eastern borders, as well as the continuing conflict in Eritrea. Good relations with Nimeiri would mean an end to Sudanese assistance to the Eritrean liberation movements and perhaps even some progress toward negotiations. For the Sudan, subject to powerful and divergent pressures within the Arab world following Sadat's initiative, and always mistrustful of Libya, rapprochement with Ethiopia could not only diminish concerns about the eastern frontier, but also possibly result in a reduction in the numbers of Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees crowded into eastern Sudan.

Despite their mutual need for an end to tension, however, the rapprochement between Nimeiri and Mengistu was a long and difficult process. Enormous mistrust had grown up between the two regimes and their respective leaders. Sudanese efforts to achieve good relations

1977, cited in FBIS, November 18, 1977, pp. 18-11.

⁸⁶⁵ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, November 15, 1977, cited in FBIS, November 17, 1977, p. 17.

with Ethiopia took this wariness into account. After the original efforts of the OAU in late 1977 had yielded little more than an end to open hostility, Sudanese Foreign Ministry officials deliberately set out to create an atmosphere of mutual trust by bringing together security officials and by re-activating mechanisms of discussion and cooperation, such as the Joint Ministerial Committee and its organs.⁸⁶⁶

The lengthy reconciliation process began with the meeting in Freetown of the OAU mediation committee in mid-December 1977, attended by the Ethiopian Foreign Minister and Sudanese Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Francis Deng. The two sides agreed to cease all hostile propaganda, to resume commercial air links and to reestablish a joint ministerial committee.⁸⁶⁷ Soon thereafter further meetings were held, and in January 1978 it was announced that air links between the two nations would be resumed and that President Nimeiri had drawn up a proposal for ending the Ethiopian-Somali conflict.⁸⁶⁸ Throughout early 1978, Nimeiri continued his mediation attempts between Somalia and Ethiopia.⁸⁶⁹

⁸⁶⁶ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸⁶⁷ Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1977.

⁸⁶⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 1, 1978, cited in FBIS, January 4, 1978, p. 14. Middle East News Agency, Cairo, January 16, 1978, cited in FBIS, January 16, 1978, p. 13. Interview of President Nimeiri, Omdurman Domestic Service, January 10, 1978, cited in FBIS, January 11, 1978, pp. 16-7.

⁸⁶⁹ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, March 3, 1978, cited in FBIS, March 6, 1978, p. 17. Arab Report and Record, March 1-15, 1978.

In April 1978 efforts at Sudanese-Ethiopian rapprochement stumbled briefly, as Ethiopian operations against Eritreans near the Sudanese border increased. The Sudan News Agency announced that the National Defense Council had met under the chairmanship of President Nimeiri to discuss the

increasing threat of the military concentrations in Ethiopia...{which are} supported by the Soviet Union, Cuba, and South Yemen ...{and} threaten to liquidate the Eritrean revolution ... also pose a threat to the security of the Sudan and the entire area...⁸⁷⁰

This was a rather mild response -- particularly in comparison with the policy toward Ethiopian military operations only a year before -- and the brief tension did not disrupt the progress toward reconciliation between the two nations. Even reports of Soviet experts' proposals for an Ethiopian dam on the Blue Nile elicited no hostile response from Khartoum.⁸⁷¹

In June 1978 a second meeting of the OAU committee for Ethiopian-Sudanese mediation was held in Dar Es Salaam. Problems clearly still existed between the two nations: the Ethiopian representative declared that the Sudan was still allowing Eritrean leaders to use Sudanese broadcast facilities and the Sudan still criticized Soviet intervention in the Ethiopian civil war.⁸⁷² President Nimeiri himself later said that the Ethiopians had taken a very hostile stand at Dar es Salaam, but Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Deng came back

⁸⁷⁰ Sudan News Agency, April 21, 1978, cited in FBIS, April 24, 1978, p. 13.

⁸⁷¹ Egyptian President Sadat was quick to say that Egypt would go to war if any state tried to deprive it of water from the Nile or attacked the Sudan. Arab Report and Record, May 1-31, 1978.

⁸⁷² Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1978.

publicly citing positive developments.⁸⁷³ The OAU committee itself expressed satisfaction at the "positive developments" in bilateral relations and proposed an early meeting of the re-activated Joint Ministerial Committee.⁸⁷⁴

Several events in July pushed the Sudanese-Ethiopian rapprochement closer to fruition despite continuing conflict in Eritrea. The Sudan was host for the July 1978 OAU summit, with President Nimeiri advocating peaceful resolution of inter-African differences and declaring during the summit that he was prepared to meet Mengistu "at any time and any place" to discuss normalization of relations.⁸⁷⁵ During the summit, the Ethiopian Foreign Minister met for two hours with Sudanese First Vice President Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, who was regarded as being the most pro-Eritrean of the major government officials, and the two emerged from the meeting talking of the deeply-rooted, historical relations between the two countries.⁸⁷⁶ At virtually the same time, Ethiopian military pressure in Eritrea was causing hundreds of refugees to flee across the Sudanese border, and on July 25th, the Sudan News Agency said that some 4,000 had crossed in the preceding two weeks.⁸⁷⁷ Nimeiri responded sharply but without the hostility of a year before:

⁸⁷³ Monthly address to the nation, Sudan News Agency, February 26, 1979, cited in FBIS, February 28, 1979, pp. 15-10. Arab Report and Record, June 16-30, 1978.

⁸⁷⁴ ibid.

⁸⁷⁵ Arab Report and Record, July 15-31, 1978.

⁸⁷⁶ Omdurman Domestic Service, July 23, 1978, cited in FBIS, July 27, 1978, p. 18.

⁸⁷⁷ Sudan News Agency, July 25, 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, July 16-31, 1978.

Despite every kind of pressure and despite every threat, we will continue to support the Eritrean cause to attain a just solution for it without ignoring the bond of brotherhood with sister Ethiopia.⁸⁷⁸

Sudanese efforts to unify the Eritrean groups continued throughout August. By October an even more conciliatory tone was heard from President Nimeiri who spoke of a future meeting with Mengistu which might be held through the efforts of other African presidents.⁸⁷⁹ When asked what the topic of the discussions would be, Nimeiri responded:

I will put some proposals to him which will help in solving some of his internal problems, particularly halting the {Ethiopian-Eritrean} war...⁸⁸⁰

The designation of the civil war as an internal Ethiopian problem was new, as Nimeiri had maintained as late as the July 1978 OAU summit that the conflict was more than an internal problem by virtue of its impact on the Sudan and the entire region; but this terminology was certain to please Mengistu. The OAU mediation committee continued its efforts to arrange a meeting between the two leaders, while simultaneously Sudanese efforts to unite the disparate Eritrean groups continued, including an October 1978 meeting in Khartoum of all factions.⁸⁸¹

⁸⁷⁸ Monthly address by the President, Omdurman Domestic Service, July 31, 1978, cited in FBIS, August 1, 1978, pp. 14-5.

⁸⁷⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, August 22, 1978, cited in FBIS, August 22, 1978, p 13.

⁸⁸⁰ Interview of President Nimeiri, October 7, 1978, An Nahar al 'Arabi We ad Duwali, Paris, October 14, 1978, cited in FBIS, October 18, 1978, pp. 11-15.

⁸⁸¹ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, October 23, 1978, cited in FBIS, October 24, 1978, pp. 14-5. Sudan News Agency, October 27, 1978, cited in FBIS, October 31, 1978, p. 18.

The end of 1978 and the beginning of 1979 saw the issue of normalization with Ethiopia return to prominence again, after several months in which it had been overshadowed by the Sudan's policy toward Egypt and the Arab world. In December 1978 Ethiopian operations against Eritrea spilled over the border into the Sudan. The Khartoum daily Al Ayam reported that Ethiopian troops, with tanks, armored cars and artillery, had crossed the north-east part of the border and seized farmlands cultivated by Eritrean refugees. Southern Region High Executive Council Chairman Joseph Lagu accused the Ethiopian government of deliberately attacking across the border into Upper Nile Province.⁸⁸²

Sudanese efforts to promote Eritrean unity, with the aim of achieving Ethiopian-Eritrean dialogue, continued however, and unity of the two main Eritrean groups was achieved through the mediation of Sudanese First Vice President Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim in late January.⁸⁸³ President Nimeiri acknowledged that Ethiopian forces had crossed the border, but said that they had withdrawn in twenty-four hours after the Sudan had drawn Ethiopian attention to the matter, and that both Sudanese and Ethiopian troops sometimes "lose their way" -- which was a matter to be resolved by diplomatic means.⁸⁸⁴ There were

⁸⁸² Al Ayam, December 3, 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, December 1-15, 1978. Statement by the Chairman of the Southern Region High Executive Council, Arab Report and Record, ibid.

⁸⁸³ Sudan News Agency, January 27, 1979, cited in Arab Report and Record, January 16-31, 1979.

⁸⁸⁴ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Hawadith, London, January 26, 1979, cited in FBIS, January 31, 1979, p. 17. Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Ayyam, January 14, 1979, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, January 14, 1979, cited by FBIS, January 15, 1979, p. 16.

reports in the Arab media that Ethiopian actions had been far more serious than either country had officially mentioned. These reports indicated that Ethiopian troops were actually occupying the disputed Fashega region, that 50,000 Sudanese troops were on the border, and that "the Egyptian garrison in the Sudan" plus Egyptian air units were supporting the Sudanese army.⁸⁸⁵ Sudanese Foreign Ministry officials state that such reports were exaggerated, and it is unlikely that the border conflict reached such a level because the long-anticipated meeting between Nimeiri and Mengistu was finally arranged in Freetown in mid-February 1979.⁸⁸⁶ The meeting was considered a failure because it produced no agreement. The two heads of state were unable even to agree on the form of a final joint statement.⁸⁸⁷ Nimeiri himself referred to the "failure" of the Freetown talks, but said that he still looked forward to reaching an understanding:

We will not close doors to the dialogue...we will continue to look forward to building strong relations with fraternal Ethiopia.⁸⁸⁸

Although the meeting may have failed to obtain an formal agreement, Foreign Ministry officials close to the situation indicate that the personal contact between the two leaders was a major turning point and was the major ingredient in the normalization which was still some

⁸⁸⁵ Al Mustaqbal, Paris, February 24, 1979, cited in FBIS, February 27, 1979, pp. 18-9.

⁸⁸⁶ Arab Report and Record, February 15-28, 1979.

⁸⁸⁷ ibid.

⁸⁸⁸ Interview of President Nimeiri, Ash Sharg al Awsat, London, March 21, 1979, cited in FBIS, March 29, 1979, pp. 13-5. Monthly address to the nation, Sudan News Agency, February 26, 1979, cited in FBIS, February 28, 1979, pp. 15-10.

⁸⁸⁹ Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

months away.⁸⁸⁹

The rest of 1979 was uneventful in the slow normalization process. The aftermath of the "failed" Freetown summit was a brief war of words in March 1979, although it did not compare in vituperation to the accusations hurled at each other a year before. Each side attacked the other for failing to reach a reconciliation because of interference by each other's patron. On March 17, 1979 President Nimeiri alleged that Mengistu had been ordered by the Soviet Union, via Libya, not to reach an understanding with the Sudan.⁸⁹⁰ Two days later Ethiopia accused the Sudan of not reaching an agreement because of Nimeiri's "instructions from his mentors in Egypt and Saudi Arabia", who had given him money and promised him military equipment just before the meeting to prevent the achievement of an accord.⁸⁹¹ In another interview, however, Nimeiri denied that Libya had been an obstacle to reaching any agreement at the Freetown summit which had brought him together with "brother Mengistu."⁸⁹²

According to the President, little progress was made between February and May 1979, but the slow process of reconciliation was beginning to take root by June, when a Sudanese official declared that

⁸⁹⁰ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Mustaqbal, Paris, March 17, 1979, cited in Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1979.

⁸⁹¹ Addis Ababa Radio, March 19, 1979, cited in Arab Report and Record, March 16-31, 1979.

⁸⁹² Interview of President Nimeiri, Ash Sharg al Awsat, London, March 21, 1979, cited in FBIS, March 29, 1979, pp. 13-5.

⁸⁹³ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Ayyam, cited by Sudan News Agency, May 18, 1979, cited in FBIS, May 22, 1979, pp. 14-6. Interview of unidentified Sudanese official, Al Mustaqbal, June 2, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 7, 1979, pp. 15-7.

"we have nothing to fear from the eastern border with Ethiopia."⁸⁹³
 Sudanese efforts concentrated on the creation of trust, a policy which was carried out through systemic efforts to create links between the two countries' military and security personnel. To this end a visit was arranged in late 1979 for Sudanese chief of national security General Omer Mohamed al Tayyib to Addis Ababa.

The problem with Ethiopia was primarily one of security...we had to show them that we're not interested in their internal situation...so we needed to use non-diplomatic channels to create a relationship between their security people and ours...⁸⁹⁴

By the end of 1979 the offices of the Eritrean groups in Khartoum had been closed and plans were being made for a revival of the Joint Ministerial Committee.⁸⁹⁵

Despite the fact that Ethiopian planes were reported to have bombed villages in eastern Sudan in January 1980, according to a member of the Sudanese People's Assembly, the normalization process continued apace in early 1980, with an Ethiopian delegation attending the SSU Congress at the end of January.⁸⁹⁶ Perhaps most important, a decision was made in early 1980 to set up a meeting of the two countries' Joint Ministerial Committee, and for the Sudanese First Vice President to

⁸⁹⁴ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸⁹⁵ An official of the Foreign Ministry said that the Sudan had started closing Eritrean groups' offices in Khartoum in early 1979. This is confirmed by the condemnation of Sudanese "efforts to harass" the Eritrean movement and its "collusion with Ethiopia" decried by a member of the Revolutionary Council of the Eritrean Liberation Front-Popular Liberation Forces. Iraqi News Agency, Baghdad, October 21, 1979, cited in FBIS, October 26, 1979, p. 15.

⁸⁹⁶ Sudan News Agency, January 9, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 11, 1980, p. 13. Sudan News Agency, January 29, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 29, 1980, p. 15.

visit Addis Ababa.⁸⁹⁷

The appointment of Gen. Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil as First Vice President in August 1979, following the dismissal of former RCC member Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim, had repercussions for Sudanese relations with Ethiopia. Having been military chief of operations for the eastern border area for some years, General Abdel Magid was keenly aware of the security problems posed by conflict with the Sudan's eastern neighbor, to the extent that he was unwilling to devote as much attention to the troublesome situation in Chad because of the priority he attached to the eastern region.⁸⁹⁸ At the same time President Nimeiri again declared the moment opportune for the Sudan to attempt mediation between Ethiopia and Somalia, in view of its strong relations with both at that time. Retreating from his previously declared support of "Eritrean independence," he said that the Sudan had always favored some form of local or decentralized government within one Ethiopian homeland and that Ethiopia had given the Sudan the green light to proceed with negotiations.⁸⁹⁹

An Eritrean leader, in the reported "uproar" over Nimeiri's statement, however, said that the Sudanese had assured him that the Sudan's basic position on the Eritrean question remained unchanged,

⁸⁹⁷ Sudan News Agency, January 29, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 30, 1980, pp. 16-7.

⁸⁹⁸ Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁸⁹⁹ Sudan News Agency, January 29, 1980, cited in FBIS January 30, 1980, p. 16.

⁹⁰⁰ Interview with Abdallah Suleiman, head of foreign relations for the Eritrean Liberation Front, Qatar News Agency, Doha, March 6, 1980, cited in FBIS, March 10, 1980, p. 12.

and that the Sudan would give Eritrean fighters full backing.⁹⁰⁰ The leaders of the Eritrean Liberation Front may have been whistling in the dark, because all indications were that Sudanese-Ethiopian relations were improving steadily, and support of the Eritreans waning. In March 1980 a Sudanese trade delegation visited Ethiopia and returned with an agreement to facilitate trade between the two countries and in mid-March First Vice President Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil returned from a four-day official visit to Addis Ababa.⁹⁰¹ The joint statement issued upon the Vice President's visit stressed the need to strengthen relations, implement all existing agreements, and reactivate all joint organs; it was decided, as discussed in January, to convene the Joint Ministerial Committee in Khartoum on April 17, 1980, and for all its subcommittees to hold sessions.⁹⁰² The Joint Ministerial Committee -- and its eight subcommittees⁹⁰³-- met in Khartoum in early May 1980 and a number of agreements were signed at that time.⁹⁰⁴ The visit of First Vice President and Minister of Defense Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil to Addis Ababa in March and the early May meetings of the Joint Ministerial Committee were important

⁹⁰¹ Sudan News Agency, March 6, 1980, cited in FBIS, March 11, 1980, p. 13. Sudan News Agency, March 13, 1980, cited in FBIS, March 17, 1980, p. 13.

⁹⁰² Ibid.

⁹⁰³ The subcommittees were on boundaries, transport, communications, trade, refugees, cultural and consular affairs, water resources, and defense/security (with the last two new subcommittees, the rest having been established with the creation of the Joint Ministerial Committee in 1965.)

⁹⁰⁴ Agreements included protocols on trade, culture, continuation of consultation on refugee matters, reestablishment of transport and communications links, exchange of experts and technical expertise, and exchange of information. Sudan News Agency, May 12, 1980, cited in FBIS, May 14, 1980, pp. 18-11.

milestones in the process of reconciliation between Nimeiri and Mengistu and probably had more significance in the bilateral relationship than the ceremonial highpoints, the state visits exchanged between the two heads of state.⁹⁰⁵

In early November two events occurred which were to have important and immediate repercussions in Sudanese foreign policy. The head of the provisional government of Chad, Goukouni Oueddai, asked for, and received, Libyan support in the civil strife in Chad, and Ethiopia's Mengistu made a very cordial visit to Tripoli. The Libyan intervention in Chad was to trigger the lowest level of Sudanese-Libyan relations since both regimes had come to power in 1969, while Mengistu's visit to Libya in the same month was to be only the foreshadowing of the pact which would be signed by Ethiopia, Libya and South Yemen ten months later. The specter of hostile Libyan forces in Chad and the likelihood of a Libyan-Ethiopian entente may have impelled Nimeiri not to let up in his efforts to solidify the friendship with Mengistu. For Nimeiri, a friendly Ethiopia was a great advantage if the Sudan had to face problems on its western border. The potential unraveling of the rapprochement with Mengistu at the same time as entente was reached between Ethiopia and Libya -- with its troops in Chad -- was a serious

⁹⁰⁵ Ethiopian President Mengistu attended the celebration of the eleventh anniversary of the "May Revolution" in 1980. Very cordial statements were issued by both sides, and the Dergue leader was decorated by President Nimeiri. Addis Ababa Domestic Service, May 25, 1980, cited in FBIS, May 30, 1980. Joint Statement by Nimeiri and Mengistu, Sudan News Agency, May 28, 1980, cited in FBIS, May 30, 1980, pp. 19-10. The Ethiopian Interior Minister visited the Sudan in September, a Sudanese military delegation returned their visit in October, and agreements were endorsed giving each country most-favored-nation status in trade relations. Sudan News Agency, October 4, 1980, cited in FBIS, October 7, 1980, p. 12. Addis Ababa Domestic Service, October 1, 1980, cited in FBIS, October 8, 1980, p. R1.

threat, but one which was not to materialize for some months.

Nimeiri made his scheduled visit to Addis Ababa in November 1980, joint statements were issued, and he was decorated, as Mengistu had been in Khartoum.⁹⁰⁶ During the meetings the two heads of state pledged that

relations would be based on keen adherence to principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference ... they committed themselves to prevent any sabotage acts against each other particularly...raids across the border...{to} cooperate to maintain peace and security along the joint border and to adhere to international, regional and bilateral agreements on refugee affairs...⁹⁰⁷

Throughout the end of 1980 and the first nine months of 1981, there was no change in the cordial relations which had been attained between the Sudan and Ethiopia. The joint border subcommittee had a successful meeting in February 1982, at which time most of the border problems which had cropped up since the last border agreement in 1972 were ironed out.⁹⁰⁸ The Ethiopian Defense Minister attended the "May Revolution" anniversary celebration in 1981, and President Nimeiri had a friendly meeting with Mengistu at the tumultuous Nairobi OAU summit in June 1981.⁹⁰⁹

⁹⁰⁶ Addis Ababa Domestic Service, November 18, 1980, cited in FBIS, November 19, 1980, pp. R1-4.

⁹⁰⁷ Addis Ababa Domestic Service, November 23, 1980, cited in FBIS, November 25, 1980, p. R3.

⁹⁰⁸ Addis Ababa Domestic Service, February 18, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 20, 1981, p. R1. Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁰⁹ Sudan News Agency, May 30, 1981, cited in FBIS, June 1, 1981, p. Q7. Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

August 1981 - July 1982

On August 17 a treaty of friendship and cooperation was signed in Tripoli by Libya, Ethiopia and South Yemen. As Libyan troops were still in Chad at this time, this pact presented one of the worst possible threats to the regime in Khartoum: the combination of Libyan money and hostility, coupled with the long, porous Chadi border and the even longer, more vulnerable and more stratigically-significant Ethiopian border. The official position taken by the Sudan in the early months following the conclusion of the pact was that it presented no threat to the Sudan, because the Sudanese government had complete trust in its friendship with Mengistu. However, by the beginning of 1982, even public statements by Sudanese officials were beginning to show concern as tensions along the border increased in spring 1982, although this was not publicized by the Sudan. Relations remained officially good through the end of the period under study, but there was an undercurrent of apprehension in Khartoum over the future of Sudanese-Ethiopian relations and possible ramifications of the Ethiopian entente with Libya.

The month after the Libyan-Ethiopian-South Yemeni agreement was signed, Nimeiri had stated in an interview that Sudanese relations with Ethiopia remained strong despite ideological differences and that Ethiopian relations with Libya did not mean that Ethiopia had become an enemy of the Sudan.¹⁰ The decision to downplay the importance of the tripartite pact, technically made by the National Security Council, was President Nimeiri's way of encouraging the Ethiopian

¹⁰ Interview of the President, Sudan News Agency, September 3, 1981, cited in FBIS, September 4, 1981, pp. Q2-4.

government to maintain course; there were members of the National Security Council and others involved in the foreign policy realm who favored a more aggressive response to the pact, but the decision lay in the hands of the President.⁹¹¹ President Nimeiri's response in an interview in October 1981 seemed to dodge the direct question of how the Aden pact represented a threat to the Sudan; he remarked merely that there was "a strategic threat represented by the Soviet presence in the region."⁹¹² In response to another question as to whether Mengistu had brief him on the "secret" resolutions of the Aden conference, Nimeiri responded that "Brother Mengistu" had briefed him only on the general statements, but that he was confident that the rest of the resolutions would "reach us at the right time."⁹¹³

By November 1981, although the official line was still one of confidence in Mengistu, greater concern with the possible repercussions of the tripartite pact was voiced. Minister for National Security General Omer Mohamed Al Tayyib said that the Sudanese government had followed "with definite concern" the contacts and secret preparations for the tripartite summit, which had as its specific targets the Sudan, Somalia, Oman and Egypt. "Therefore we had to make our calculations and assessments to defend ourselves."⁹¹⁴ He continued, however, saying that relations between the Sudan and

⁹¹¹ Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹¹² Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Hawadith, London, October 9, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 10, 1981, pp. Q8-11.

⁹¹³ Ibid.

⁹¹⁴ Interview with General Omer Mohamed Al Tayyib, Al Majallah, London, November 7-13, 1981, cited in FBIS, November 11, 1981, pp. Q3-5.

Ethiopia were excellent, that Ethiopia had stressed that bilateral relations would not be affected, and that he had confidence in Mengistu.⁹¹⁵ A joint statement of the tripartite pact members in mid-November accused Egypt, Somalia, Oman and the Sudan of conspiring with American imperialism.⁹¹⁶

In the beginning of 1982 relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia were becoming frayed, although the uproar in Khartoum over domestic political problems obscured this for some time. President Nimeiri remarked, however, in April 1982, that relations were not as good as the three or four previous months.⁹¹⁷

In March 1982 the President stated explicitly that Libya was using the Ethiopian borders with Sudan in subversive operations, but that he did not know if Ethiopia was involved or not.⁹¹⁸ Heavy fighting in Eritrea in February and March, following the central government's launching of another offensive against Eritrean forces certainly aggravated an already tense situation between the Sudan and Ethiopia.⁹¹⁹ At the end of April, Foreign Minister Mohamed Mirghani was dispatched to Addis Ababa with a personal message to Mengistu from Nimeiri, and a few days later President Nimeiri stated that relations

⁹¹⁵ ibid.

⁹¹⁶ Addis Ababa Domestic Service, November 18, 1981, cited in FBIS, November 19, 1981, p. R1.

⁹¹⁷ Interview of President Nimeiri, The Middle East, April 1982, pp. 15-16.

⁹¹⁸ Press Conference of President Nimeiri, Sudan News Agency, March 17, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 18, 1982, pp. Q4-5.

⁹¹⁹ Gayle Smith, "Dispatch: The War in Eritrea," Merip Reports {Middle East Research and Information Project}, no. 106, June 1982, pp. 27-28.

with Ethiopia were based on good neighborliness. "He expressed confidence that the Ethiopian people realize that their interests are linked with Sudan and not with Al Qadafi or South Yemen."²⁰

The situation continued to deteriorate, however, and in mid-May there were reports of Sudanese troop mobilization, Ethiopian violations of Sudanese airspace, and urgent messages about the situation from Nimeiri to Arab leaders.²¹ A high-level Ethiopian delegation arrived Khartoum before the end of May and Nimeiri himself left for Cairo at the end of the month for talks with Egyptian President Mubarak.²² The Ethiopian delegation held talks with Sudanese officials which ended the immediate crisis. Agreement was reached on suspension of all facilities used by dissidents working to disrupt either state.²³

In mid-June a Sudanese delegation, headed by the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, returned the visit of the Ethiopians, and on June 21 the joint subcommittee on security and defense adopted a number of recommendations implementing the agreements signed in May 1980.²⁴ As the meetings were ending, there were renewed reports of border

²⁰ Interview of President Nimeiri with Al Ahrām, Cairo, May 5, 1982, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, May 4 (cited in advance of publication), cited in FBIS, May 5, 1982, p. D5.

²¹ Ar Rayah, Doha, May 24, 1982, cited in FBIS, May 27, 1982, p. P1. Border violations had been going on at least since the beginning of the year, according to Merip Reports, op. cit.

²² Sudan News Agency, May 24, 1982, cited in FBIS, May 28, 1982, p. Q2.

²³ Sudan News Agency, May 28, 1982, cited in FBIS, June 2, 1982, pp. Q4-5.

²⁴ Addis Ababa Service to Neighboring Countries, June 21, 1982, cited in FBIS, June 22, 1982, p. R4.

tensions following Ethiopian operations against Eritreans.²⁵

Sudanese-Ethiopian relations at the end of the period under study were in an ambiguous state. The Ethiopian government was carrying out some small operations against the Sudan across the border and the stability of the border areas was also threatened by Ethiopian operations against Eritrean forces. But the Sudanese government refused to react openly to these actions, preferring to downplay the threat posed by the tripartite pact.

Kenya

Sudanese policy toward Kenya was uniformly positive and cordial from July 1976 through July 1982. In 1978, 1980 and 1982 President Nimeiri visited Nairobi, agreeing each time with his Kenyan counterpart both on policy issues and on the need to continue to strengthen bilateral relations.²⁶ In addition to other visits between officials of the two nations, the Joint Ministerial Consultative Committee met at least three times during this period: in April 1979, in November 1980, and in June 1982.²⁷ At the second meeting, the two subcommittees (on borders and economic/technical cooperation) met as well, and agreement was reached on a new program of cultural and

²⁵ WAKH, Manama, June 20, 1982, cited in FBIS, June 24, 1982, p. Q1.

²⁶ In December 1978 Nimeiri's visit was part of an East African tour in his capacity as Chairman of the OAU. He visited Kenya again in June 1980. Sudan News Agency, June 8, 1980, cited in FBIS, June 10, 1980, p. 11. Nimeiri was again in the Kenyan capital during Kenyan President Arap Moi's tenure as OAU Chairman, in April 1982. Nairobi Domestic Service, April 12, 1982, cited in FBIS, May 13, 1982, p. R1.

²⁷ Sudan News Agency, April 16, 1979, cited in FBIS, April 17, 1979, p. 14. Omdurman Domestic Service, November 2, 1980, cited in FBIS, November 4, 1980, pp. 11-4. Nairobi Domestic Service, May 25, 1982, cited in FBIS, June 2, 1982, pp. Q6-7.

technical cooperation as well as on tourism and trade.²²⁸ Kenya had always tried to keep good relations with the Sudan, and certainly the Sudanese side was pleased to have one neighbor with whom there was never any serious problem.

Uganda and Tanzania

Sudanese policy toward Uganda and Tanzania between 1976 and 1982 both began and ended on a cordial level. Ugandan President Amin made a state visit to the Sudan in November 1976 and agreements were reached in both 1976 and 1977 on transportation and communications cooperation between the two countries.²²⁹

The Ugandan civil turmoil and the subsequent Tanzanian invasion, however, ultimately disturbed Sudanese relations with both nations. As violence within Uganda and between Uganda and Tanzania mounted in late 1978, Nimeiri, as Chairman of the OAU, visited both nations in a tour of the region, and attempted, unsuccessfully, to mediate between them.²³⁰

Sudanese relations with Tanzania had been closer than with Uganda because of the personal relationship of the two presidents, the working relationship between officials on the party level, the

²²⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, November 2, 1980, cited in FBIS, November 4, 1980, pp. 11-4.

²²⁹ Kampala Domestic Service, November 18, 1976, cited in FBIS, November 19, 1976, p. 13. Omdurman Domestic Service, March 28, 1977, cited in FBIS, March 29, 1977, p. 13. Omdurman Domestic Service, April 2, 1977, cited in FBIS, April 6, 1977, p. 14.

²³⁰ President Nimeiri stated that during his December 1978 visit to the two countries, they had agreed on a return to the international borders and a halt to propaganda campaigns. Omdurman Domestic Service, December 11, 1978, cited in FBIS, December 19, 1978, pp. 113-18.

friendship engendered by common membership in the "Casablanca group" of the OAU in the early days of 1969 and 1970, and the presence of numerous Sudanese teachers and experts in Tanzania. On the other hand, there were lingering suspicions of Amin in the Sudanese government because he was suspected, along with Libya, of being involved in the abortive attempt to take over Juba Airport in February 1977 and because of his unpredictable behavior.⁹³¹ Despite his personal inclination to favor Nyerere over Amin, President Nimeiri saw no alternative to the policy of non-interference and opposed the Tanzanian invasion for that reason.⁹³² His role at that time as Chairman of the OAU made him more adamant about the inadmissibility of intervention in the affairs of other nations, and made him feel compelled to attempt mediation between Uganda and Tanzania.⁹³³ Ironically, it was Uganda which responded positively to Sudanese mediation, while Nyerere opposed Nimeiri's efforts, thinking that he would favor the Idi Amin because he was a Muslim.⁹³⁴ The Sudan did not condemn the Tanzanian invasion of Uganda immediately; Nimeiri expressed "satisfaction" with the "explanation of the situation" brought to him from Nyerere by the Tanzanian Foreign Minister in May 1979.⁹³⁵

⁹³¹ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹³² Ibid.

⁹³³ Ibid.

⁹³⁴ Ibid.

⁹³⁵ Sudan News Agency, May 14, 1979, cited in FBIS, May 15, 1979, pp. 14-5.

Within a few days, however, there began to be signs of concern over the religious aspect of the Ugandan civil war and Tanzanian intervention. On May 23 President Nimeiri remarked that Muslims were fleeing Uganda because "Islam is now become a crime in Uganda for which any person can be killed."³⁶ The new Ugandan regime installed in April 1979 by the Tanzanian army was at first greeted courteously, however, by the Sudanese government. President Nimeiri met with the new Ugandan Foreign Minister and mentioned the Sudan's eagerness to establish close relations with all neighbors; Foreign Minister Rashid al Taher emphasized the Sudan's eagerness to see security, stability and peace prevail in Uganda.³⁷ Concern, however, over the fate of Muslims in Uganda mounted in the Sudan and news broadcasts mentioned that Ugandan refugees had appealed to Nimeiri personally to stop the "wholesale massacres of thousands of Muslims" by Tanzanian forces.³⁸

Reported assaults on the Sudanese Embassy (which had been closed in April amid the violence of the fall of Kampala) by Tanzanian forces did not improve the deteriorating relationship between the Sudan and Tanzania -- and the new Tanzanian-backed government of Uganda.³⁹ The burden of a reported 250,000 Ugandan refugees in southern Sudan made the situation very costly for the Sudan, and the instability in Uganda

³⁶ Sudan News Agency, May 22, 1979, cited in FBIS, May 23, 1979, pp. 18-9.

³⁷ Omdurman Domestic Service, May 31, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 1, 1979, pp. 14-5.

³⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 2, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 6, 1979, p. 14.

³⁹ Omdurman Domestic Service, June 5, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 6, 1979, pp. 16-7.

-- as always -- caused concern in Khartoum about the possibility of its spilling over the border.⁹⁴⁰ Ugandan accusations that the Sudan was recruiting mercenaries in support of the deposed Idi Amin, and Sudanese accusations of Uganda's alleged deportation of people of Sudanese origin in June 1979 exacerbated the dispute.⁹⁴¹ In early June President Nimeiri remarked

Let the army that toppled Amin finish with Idi Amin first and then come and attack us. Idi Amin, brother, is still fighting with his soldiers inside Uganda and is in control of two thirds of the country.⁹⁴²

A month later the President cited Tanzania's "obvious violation" of the OAU charter when it invaded Uganda, and referred to the "inhumane persecution" in Uganda which had resulted in the influx of thousands of refugees into the Sudan and other countries. He promised to raise this issue at the forthcoming OAU session.⁹⁴³ A meeting in Lagos between the foreign ministers of the Sudan and Uganda in August 1979 did not resolve the dispute. The Sudanese side denied allegations that it was preparing to invade Uganda to put Amin back in power and the Sudanese Foreign Minister declared that it was impossible either to understand the new Ugandan regime's aggressive stance or to re-establish good relations.⁹⁴⁴ In October 1979, the Sudan again denied

⁹⁴⁰ The figure 250,000 is given by an unidentified Sudanese official in an interview with Al Mustaqbal, June 2, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 7, 1979, pp. 15-7.

⁹⁴¹ Ibid.

⁹⁴² Interview of President Nimeiri in Al Mustaqbal, June 9, 1979, cited in FBIS, June 15, 1979, pp. 15-9.

⁹⁴³ Monthly Address to the Nation, Omdurman Domestic Service, July 2, 1979, cited in FBIS, July 6, 1979, pp. 16-7.

⁹⁴⁴ Sudan News Agency, August 18, 1979, cited in FBIS, August 23, 1979, pp. 15-6.

aiding Amin, and declared that it had avoided interfering in Uganda's affairs, trying instead to "build bridges of friendship."⁹⁴⁵

By November 1979 a change of policy on the part of the Sudan was in the making. There were several reasons for it: First of all, Nimeiri had never entirely trusted Amin in any case, and

the only good thing in our relationship with him...was that stability in Uganda kept the bed warm for us in southern Sudan.⁹⁴⁶

President Nimeiri decided to come to terms with the Tanzanian-backed government in Kampala because, by the end of 1979, it was clear that Amin was gone permanently, that no one in Uganda wanted him back, that the new regime was supported by the Sudan's friends in the West, and that some degree of stability had been regained in Uganda; furthermore, the Sudan did not want to alienate the Ugandan people once they had achieved stability.⁹⁴⁷ By the end of 1979, Nimeiri had affirmed the Sudan's support for the establishment of "security and stability" in Uganda and Sudanese determination to establish "excellent" relations with Uganda.⁹⁴⁸ There was even beginning to be concern in Khartoum that a premature withdrawal of Tanzanian forces would lead to renewed chaos, a notion which was to prompt several months later an offer by the Sudan to train Ugandan officers.⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴⁵ Statement by First Vice President and Minister of Defense Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil, Al Sharq al Awsat, London, October 2, 1979, cited in FBIS, October 10, 1979, pp. 16-8.

⁹⁴⁶ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁸ Sudan News Agency, November 19, 1979, cited in FBIS, November 20, 1979, p. 11.

⁹⁴⁹ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

In December 1979 the Sudanese-Ugandan Joint Ministerial Commission met in Juba and the Ugandan Foreign Minister visited Khartoum; these discussions led to an agreement to reopen the Sudanese Embassy in Kampala and to improve bilateral relations.⁹⁵⁰ Relations between the two countries did improve during 1980 but slowly. Only one Sudanese delegation was reported to have visited Uganda, and there was no reported comment by the Sudanese president on the election of his old friend, Milton Obote, to the Ugandan Presidency at the end of 1980. In April 1981, however, Obote made a one day visit to Khartoum, and relations took a visible upswing with the report of Nimeiri's offer to train "any number" of Ugandan officers.⁹⁵¹ In June 1981 President Nimeiri joined his Ugandan and Zairean counterparts for a tripartite summit in Zaire.⁹⁵²

Relations with Tanzania did not appear to improve as had relations between the new government in Uganda and the Sudan, although there had been no rupture of relations in any case. The failure of Tanzanian-Sudanese relations to return to their old warmth may have been due to the fact that President Nimeiri persisted in referring to the Tanzanian invasion as a "violation of the regional and international organizations in which the Sudan believes" despite his own assertion that it had "probably helped the Ugandan people in changing their

⁹⁵⁰ Sudan News Agency, January 11, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 11, 1980, p. 14.

⁹⁵¹ Sudan News Agency, May 5, 1981, cited in FBIS, May 6, 1981, p. Q4.

⁹⁵² Sudan News Agency, June 4, 1981, cited in FBIS, June 5, 1981, p. Q20.

⁹⁵³ Sudan News Agency, September 3, 1981, cited in FBIS, September 4, 1981, pp. Q2-4.

government for the best."⁵³

Zaire

Sudanese policy toward neighboring Zaire was -- like policy toward Kenya -- uniformly friendly throughout the 1976-1982 period. The Sudan was supportive of Mobutu during the Shaba province crisis of April and May 1977. Beginning quietly with a statement by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Deng calling for peaceful resolution of the dispute, and noting the Sudan's "firm policy of rejecting interference in the domestic affairs" of other nations, a week later the crisis was more directly addressed by President Nimeiri. He condemned the "foreign invasion" of Shaba Province, and said that the Sudan was ready to support Mobutu with "everything it needs" to crush the invasion; he sent a SSU Political Bureau member to Kinshasa to meet with Mobutu and discuss Sudanese aid.⁵⁴ Although the Sudan was interested in aiding Mobutu it was unable to do so because, in the words of one Sudanese diplomat, "you can't send what you don't have."⁵⁵ The Sudan was swift to find common cause with the beleaguered Mobutu, perceiving Soviet and Cuban involvement as another manifestation of Soviet designs in Africa.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, April 11, 1977, cited in FBIS, April 11, 1977, p. 16.

⁵⁵ Interview with Foreign Minister Mchamed Mirghani Mubarak, at that time Ambassador to Egypt.

⁵⁶ Statement by First Vice President Bagir when receiving the Vice President of the Zaire Executive Council and Committee on Foreign Affairs, Omdurman Domestic Service, April 24, 1977, cited in FBIS, April 25, 1977, p. 14. Statement by Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, Sudan News Agency, May 12, 1977, cited in FBIS, May 12, 1977, pp. 16-7.

President Mobutu visited the Sudan twice after the crisis, in July 1977 and December 1978,⁵⁷ and in June 1981, President Nimeiri went to Kinshasa for a meeting with the presidents of both Zaire and Uganda.⁵⁸ An agreement was signed on cooperation, trade and customs at the March 1982 meeting of the Sudan-Zaire Joint Ministerial Committee.⁵⁹ The May 1982 announcement by Zaire that it was establishing diplomatic relations with Israel, with an Embassy in Jerusalem, a policy which prompted several Arab nations to break diplomatic relations with Zaire, elicited no public response from the Sudan, which would, in any case, have been hard-pressed to justify criticism of virtually the same action by a non-Arab African state which it condoned from Egypt.

Central African Republic

Little can be said about Sudanese relations with the Central African Republic (CAR) except that they were neighborly and uneventful. President Bokassa visited the Sudan in October 1976, and there was a meeting in Khartoum of the Sudan-CAR Joint Ministerial Committee in December 1979.⁶⁰ Although nothing was said at the time, Sudanese officials were not sorry to see Bokassa overthrown, and

⁵⁷ Sudan News Agency, July 19, 1977, cited in FBIS, July 19, 1977, p. 16. Sudan News Agency, December 11, 1978, cited in FBIS, December 13, 1978, p. 15.

⁵⁸ Sudan News Agency, June 4, 1981, cited in FBIS, June 5, 1978, p. Q20.

⁵⁹ AZAP, Kinshasa, March 23, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 26, 1982, pp. S1-2.

⁶⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, October 13, 1976, cited in FBIS, October 15, 1976, p. i4. Sudan News Agency, December 16, 1979, cited in FBIS, December 17, 1979, p. 13.

President Dacco was invited to visit Khartoum.⁶¹ Before the visit could take place, Dacco himself was ousted, an event upon which the Sudan made no comment. Relations continued with the new regime as with the previous ones, and in February 1982 the Joint Ministerial Committee on border issues met in Khartoum.⁶²

Chad

Although the Chadi civil war, and Sudanese interest in ending it through mediation, had been going on since the mid-1960's it was only beginning in 1976 that the virtual disintegration of the Chadi government involved the Sudan very deeply in efforts to bring order to its western neighbor.⁶³ The principal reasons that Nimeiri was willing to invest so much effort in trying to end the Chadi civil war were the high cost to the Sudan of supporting the refugees from the conflict, and the fact that civil disorder in neighboring Chad could ultimately affect the security of the Sudan, particularly the western areas, in which many of the people are ethnically indistinguishable from natives of Chad.⁶⁴ In the almost two years between the end of 1977 and the August 1979 Lagos conference, the Sudan was involved continually in efforts to achieve ceasefires in the frequent outbreaks of fighting in Ndjamena, to bring together the warring Chadi factions,

⁶¹ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁶² Sudan News Agency, February 4, 1982, cited in FBIS, February 5, 1982, p. Q3.

⁶³ Interview with First Vice President Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil, Ash Sharg al Awsat, London, October 2, 1979, cited in FBIS, October 10, 1979, pp.16-8.

⁶⁴ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry. The number of Chadi refugees in the Sudan is almost always impossible to know precisely as the border divides indistinguishable tribes, and even families.

and to work together with Chad's other neighbors to bring about a lasting resolution of the conflict. At least twelve international conferences and Sudanese mediation initiatives occurred during this brief period. Sudanese concern was manifested in the time-consuming involvement not only of diplomats but also of cabinet ministers and and the First Vice President, Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim.⁹⁶⁵

The period of the most intense Sudanese efforts to mediate in Chad -- from the end of 1977 through August 1979 -- coincided with the warmest relations with Libya which the Sudan had during 1976-1982, and involvement of Libya in the mediation process (despite Libyan enmity with some Chadi elements) was an element of the Sudanese strategy. The reasons for trying to include Libya were that Libya was perceived as having influence with some of the Chadi factions and as being genuine interested in Chadi reconciliation.⁹⁶⁶

The neutral position taken by the Sudan toward the numerous Chadi factions during this period was probably the reason that Sudanese mediation proved acceptable to most of the warring groups, but it may also have prolonged the conflict, to the detriment of the Sudan's own interests. Twice, in both February and March 1979, the Sudan intervened diplomatically in the violent clashes in Ndjamena, both times preventing Hissene Habre's faction from achieving victory over its major opponent.⁹⁶⁷ In retrospect it appears that if the Sudan had permitted Habre's forces to win in February or March 1979, both Chad

⁹⁶⁵ Ezzedin Hamed, principal negotiator for the Sudan, was Minister for Egyptian Affairs and later Minister of Industry.

⁹⁶⁶ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁶⁷ Ibid.

and the Sudan might have been spared the lengthy disputes, negotiations and conflicts which were to transpire between then and Habre's final victory over transitional President Goukouni Oueddai in June 1982. Operating without the benefit of such hindsight, and always conscious of the lessons of the Sudanese civil war, President Nimeiri felt strongly that the only possible long-term solution lay in negotiation, not military victory.⁶⁶

As early as April 1979 at the second Kano (Nigeria) conference, the Sudanese delegation began to feel that Libyan interest in the mediation was not what they had once thought and that in fact the Libyans either did not want a united Chad, or wanted it only on their own terms.⁶⁷ By the end of the summer of 1979 this feeling had grown although Sudanese relations with Libya were still quite good. The Sudan, however, still refused to intervene in the conflict on the side of any faction, despite support for Hissene Habre among some members of the common Sudanese-Chadi tribes along the border; accusations in the press of Sudanese dispatch of weapons to Chad were "categorically denied."⁶⁸

In October 1980, however, one of the faction leaders, Goukouni Oueddai, who had been named President under the transitional government plan agreed upon in negotiation but never fully implemented, took the surprising step of calling on Libya for aid against the other factions, primarily that of transitional government

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Sudan News Agency, April 10, 1980, cited in FBIS, April 11, 1980, p. 14.

Prime Minister, Hissene Habre.⁹⁷¹ Libya obliged with a force which at its highest level was estimated to be about 6,000 men.⁹⁷² Although the Sudan was represented at the December 1980 conference on Chadi reconciliation in Lagos, it disputed the outcome of the conference. President Nimeiri said that there was no possibility of peace in Chad until the Libyans withdrew, and that the conference had ignored the essence of the problem which, at that time, was the presence of Libyan troops.⁹⁷³

Amid reports that Libyan troops were massing on the Chadi-Sudanese border, relations between the Sudan and Libya plummeted. Talk in Libya about the planned "merger" of Libya and Chad was extremely discomfoting in Khartoum, and the renewed flood of Chadi refugees bore heavily on the Sudanese economy which was already on the verge of bankruptcy.

While the Sudanese government did ask the Nigerian government not to hand Hissene Habre over to the Libyan-backed government of Goukouni Oueddai,⁹⁷⁴ later requests from Habre for aid in the form of small arms and ammunition, were denied by the Sudan.⁹⁷⁵ In August 1981 the

⁹⁷¹ This was surprising because Goukouni had had very poor relations with the Libyans for some time. Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁷² Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁷³ Sudan News Agency, December 21, 1981, cited in FBIS, December 22, 1981, p. 13.

⁹⁷⁴ As Sharq al Awsat, London, December 31, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 5, 1981, p. 18.

⁹⁷⁵ Neither the request nor the denial were publicized other than continued Sudanese denials that it was aiding any of the factions. Interview with officials of the Foreign Ministry.

Sudanese Foreign Minister stated that the Sudan did not aid any of the factions in Chad lest it repeat Libya's mistake there.⁹⁷⁶ This decision did not reflect precisely the Sudanese attitude toward Habre, but was made in a meeting of the Sudanese National Security Council at the urging of First Vice President and Minister of Defense General Abdel Magid Hamid Khalil.⁹⁷⁷ Although the First Vice President was not wont to have an influence on foreign policy, he had been for some years director of military operations in the eastern Sudan near Ethiopia, and his argument that Sudanese involvement with Chad in the form of aid to Habre not be allowed to distract from the more potentially serious problem of Ethiopia, was persuasive to the President.⁹⁷⁸

Libyan withdrawal from Chad in December 1981 was a great relief to President Nimeiri, but it cast doubt on his earlier contention that Libyan presence in Chad was the only problem between the Sudan and Libya,⁹⁷⁹ since Sudanese-Libyan relations continued to be very bad.

Although relations between the Goukouni government in Chad and the Nimeiri government improved considerably after the Libyan withdrawal, some damage to the Sudanese position in Africa and the Arab world may already have been done. Already sharing to some degree Egypt's isolation in the Arab world since "normalization" of relations with Egypt when threatened by Libyan presence in Chad in March 1981, the

⁹⁷⁶ Sudan News Agency, August 5, 1981, cited in FBIS, August 7, 1981, p. Q3.

⁹⁷⁷ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁷⁸ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁷⁹ Interview with President Nimeiri.

Sudan's isolation was further highlighted at the June 1981 OAU summit in Nairobi when the Sudan and Egypt virtually stood alone in the vehemence of their opposition to Libyan presence in Chad.⁹⁸⁰ Neither Sadat nor Nimeiri had laid the groundwork for the OAU summit that Qadafi had, and their position suffered by comparison, despite the sympathy of a number of African states.⁹⁸¹

Better relations were effected with Goukouni, who visited the Sudan in January 1982, at which time agreement was reached on reactivation of the Sudan-Chad Joint Ministerial Committee, which was to meet in May 1982 in Khartoum.⁹⁸² The Sudan continued to call for dialogue among all the conflicting parties in Chad.⁹⁸³ Only a few days before Habre's forces wrested Ndjamen from Goukouni, President Nimeiri severely criticised Goukouni's refusal to meet with Habre and declared that his "foolishness" had led to the Habre being poised to take Ndjamen "either today or very soon."⁹⁸⁴ Habre's victory in Ndjamen appears to have been well received privately in Khartoum but the public response was a statesmanlike reaffirmation of Sudanese belief in the need for peaceful resolution and national reconciliation, support for Habre's call for such a process, and a declaration of

⁹⁸⁰ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁸¹ Ibid.

⁹⁸² Sudan News Agency, February 25, 1982, cited in FBIS, March 2, 1982, p. Q4. Sudan News Agency, May 17, 1982, cited in FBIS, May 19, 1982, p. Q7.

⁹⁸³ Sudan News Agency, May 17, 1982, cited in FBIS, May 19, 1982, p. Q7.

⁹⁸⁴ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 1, 1982, cited in FBIS, June 2, 1982, pp. D1-3.

our adherence to OAU resolutions...which called for a ceasefire, national reconciliation, general elections and the establishment of legitimate and constitutional institutions, prior to the withdrawal of African peace-keeping forces...{which} suggests a conference on the basis of the September 1979 Lagos conference agreement.⁹⁸⁵

Somalia

Other than the states of North Africa, its actual neighbors, and Tanzania, the African state with which the Sudan had the most significant relationship was Somalia. Somali President Siad Barre was a personal friend of Nimeiri. Somalia was a fellow member of the Arab League, shared with the Sudan the vexing problem of relations with Ethiopia, moved away from intimacy with the Soviet Union in 1977, and was one of only two other Arab League members to share the Sudan's refusal to isolate Egypt.

Early in the 1976-1982 period the Sudan attempted to draw Somalia into the tacit alliance it was attempting to create among the Arab states of the Red Sea to "contain" Ethiopia. As early as March 1976 Nimeiri had counselled Siad Barre not to invade Ethiopia in order to seize the Ogaden because even if the Somali attempt succeeded initially, Ethiopia would eventually recapture its territory.⁹⁸⁶ Although the Sudan appeared to be sympathetic to Somalia at the time, the Somali invasion of the Ogaden angered Nimeiri.⁹⁸⁷ Just as Sudanese policy toward the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict had adamantly supported a united Ethiopia (except briefly and rhetorically in early 1977), so

⁹⁸⁵ Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sudan News Agency, June 7, 1982, cited in FBIS, June 8, 1982, p. Q1.

⁹⁸⁶ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid.

also had the Sudanese view of Ethiopian-Somali conflict always supported the notion that the Ogaden is a part of Ethiopia, despite the fact that its inhabitants are ethnic Somalis.⁹⁸⁸

Although the Sudanese government did not openly condemn the Somali invasion of the Ogaden, it did not support it, despite the warm relations with Somalia and the poor relations with Ethiopia. The call for peaceful resolution and offers of Sudanese mediation were constantly reiterated. The horns of the dilemma with which the Sudan was presented were the desire to condemn Soviet and Cuban involvement in Ethiopia and assistance to the Ethiopian war effort in the Ogaden and yet an unwillingness to condone Somali violation of the OAU concept of the inviolability of international boundaries. The outcome of this dilemma was a general policy of condemning Soviet bloc aid to Ethiopia, noting dangers common to both the Sudan and Somalia, and allusions to sympathy toward Somalia, without ever declaring outright support of Somali policy. As early as June 1977, Nimeiri warned that the Soviet arms flow into Ethiopia might force Somalia to launch a "preventive operation, and we will naturally take the side of Somalia."⁹⁸⁹

At a time when both Sudanese and Somali relations with Ethiopia were poor, Somali President Siad Barre visited the Sudan twice, in

⁹⁸⁸ There is consensus on this among Foreign Ministry officials.

⁹⁸⁹ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Sayyad, Beirut, June 2, 1977, cited by Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 1, 1977, cited in FBIS, June 2, 1977, p. 17.

⁹⁹⁰ Omdurman Domestic Service, November 29, 1977, cited in FBIS, November 30, 1977, p. 18. Omdurman Domestic Service, January 2, 1978, cited in FBIS, January 4, 1978, p. 14.

November 1977 and January 1978.⁹⁹⁰ It was reported that President Nimeiri went so far as to tell two visiting U.S. Congressmen in late January that he had promised to send a brigade of troops to Somalia in the event of an Ethiopian invasion.⁹⁹¹ During the first part of 1978, as Somali forces suffered serious reverses and Sudanese-Ethiopian relations slowly improved, Nimeiri offered to mediate between Ethiopia and Somalia. He expressed concern over the "catastrophic effects" on the government of Siad Barre of the collapse of Somali units fighting in the Ogaden, and he claimed that, even if Ethiopia stopped at the border, the Soviet Union would do everything in its power to remove Said Barre from power in revenge for his expulsion of the Soviets in 1977.⁹⁹² He welcomed Somalia's decision in mid-March 1978 to withdraw from the Ogaden and called for Soviet and Cuban withdrawal from the area as well.⁹⁹³

As the conflict continued to smoulder, President Nimeiri sounded again and again the theme of Soviet interference.⁹⁹⁴ Sudanese calls for mediation continued throughout the active phase of the Somali-Ethiopian conflict, and, although the Sudan never formally took a position on Somali actions, as the battle went increasingly against

⁹⁹¹ Washington Post, January 27, 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, January 15-31, 1978.

⁹⁹² Deutsche Press Agency, Hamburg, February 12, 1978, cited in FBIS, February 13, 1978, p. 16.

⁹⁹³ Omdurman Radio, March 15, cited in Arab Report and Record, March

⁹⁹⁴ He stated on February 21, 1978 that he did not deny that Somali-Ethiopia differences preceded Soviet intervention, but that the differences became more extreme after the Soviets interfered, and that Soviet intervention had thwarted all Sudanese efforts to bring about an accord. Omdurman Domestic Service, February 21, 1978, cited in FBIS, March 2, 1978, p. 16.

Somalia, moral support for Somalia was forthcoming. The Minister of Information noted in May 1978 that

the Sudan is not a sufficient military or economic power to be able to provide it {military support}. But Sudan is always interested in Somalia's affairs ... and we have a special sympathy for Somalia. However, I cannot say that we have given it military support because we are not capable of doing it and the Somalis understand that...Despite the Sudan's realization of the Somalis' fate in the Ogaden, it has always insisted on peaceful solution. It is not necessary for one state to adopt the views of another just because their relations are good.''⁵

When things looked particularly bad for Somalia the Sudan privately warned Ethiopia not to try to occupy its eastern neighbor.''⁶ Although President Nimeiri noted much later, in a September 1981 interview, that the Sudan had "stood against Somalia when the latter tried to occupy land of others," Sudanese condemnation of Somali policy was not clearly articulated in 1977-1978.''⁷ Whatever Sudanese distress there may have been over Somalia's ill-fated foray in the Ogaden, the long, warm relationship between the two countries survived the crisis and the frequent official contact which had long characterized relations between them continued.

''⁵ An Nahar al Arabi Wa Ad Dawli, Paris, May 20, 1978, cited in FBIS, May 24, 1978, pp. 12-3.

''⁶ Interview with an official of the Foreign Ministry.

''⁷ Sudan News Agency, September 3, 1981, cited in FBIS, September 4, 1981, pp. Q2-4. Sudanese condemnation of Somali actions is corroborated by officials of the Foreign Ministry.

Policy toward North and South Korea, the People's Republic of China, Yugoslavia, and Iran

North and South Korea

Sudanese relations with both North and South Korea remained good, as the decision to raise relations between the Sudan and South Korea to the ambassadorial level in March 1977 did not appear to adversely affect relations with the regime of Kim Il Sung. Three North Korean envoys were welcomed in Khartoum in the 1976-1982 period, the last of whom was the Vice President of North Korea, with whom Nimeiri agreed on efforts to strengthen bilateral relations.⁹⁹⁸ Even beyond the agreement to raise the level of their diplomatic representation, relations between South Korea and the Sudan improved during this period. There was an agreement on the part of the South Korean government to invest as much as \$500 million in Sudanese industry, and to provide \$150 million in development assistance over a period of several years.⁹⁹⁹

The Peoples' Republic of China

The PRC continued to be praised as that major power involved in economic development which did not "interfere in African internal affairs."¹⁰⁰⁰ There were numerous exchanges of official delegations,

⁹⁹⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 13, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 14, 1977, p. 13. Sudan News Agency, February 21, 1981, cited in FBIS, February 13, 1981, p. 15. Sudan News Agency, February 24, 1982, cited in FBIS, February 25, 1982, p. Q4.

⁹⁹⁹ Middle East Money, December 20, 1976, cited in Arab Report and Record, December 15-31, 1976. Moroccan News Agency, Casablanca, March 30, 1977, cited in Arab Report and Record, March 15-31, 1977.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Interview with Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, Events, Beirut, May 6, 1977 (sic), cited in FBIS, May 4, 1977, pp. 12-3.

including several Sudanese and Chinese military groups (June 1977, August 1979, November 1979, and December 1981; and October 1978, respectively).¹⁰⁰¹ Other delegations were exchanged and in June 1977 President Nimeiri made a ten-day state visit to China. His arrival was boycotted by the Soviet, most East European, and the Cuban ambassadors but a Peking newspaper praised him for his expulsion of the Soviet military advisors the previous month.¹⁰⁰² Nimeiri returned with agreements for increased development assistance and military aid from the PRC.¹⁰⁰³

There was praise for the PRC as well on the level of international politics. In the 1979 independence anniversary speech President Nimeiri declared the rapprochements between China and the US and between China and Japan were

"an important factor in building peace and stability in the world...a strong and developed People's Republic of China will be a decisive factor in the international balance of power..."¹⁰⁰⁴

Yugoslavia

¹⁰⁰¹ Middle East News Agency, Cairo, June 21, 1977, cited in FBIS, June 22, 1977, p. 16. Sudan News Agency, September 1, 1979, cited in Arab Report and Record, September 1-15, 1979, Sudan News Agency, no date, cited by Omdurman Domestic Service, October 25, 1979, cited in FBIS, October 26, 1979, p. 16. Sudan News Agency, December 4, 1981, cited in FBIS, December 8, 1981, p. Q 13. Sudan News Agency, October 24, 1978, cited in FBIS, October 26, 1978, p. 17.

¹⁰⁰² Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1977.

¹⁰⁰³ Sudan News Agency, and Al Sahafa, no dates given, cited in Arab Report and Record, June 1-15, 1977.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Speech by President Nimeiri at the celebration of the anniversary of Sudanese independence, Sudan News Agency, January 1, 1979, cited in FBIS, January 2, 1979, p. 16.

Sudanese policy toward Yugoslavia was as almost as friendly as that toward the PRC, but carried out at a slightly lower level. Official delegations were exchanged -- such as Sudanese delegations to Yugoslavia in December 1977 and June 1978 and Yugoslav groups in Khartoum in March 1978, October 1978, and December 1981 -- but the visitors were less numerous and generally of a lower rank than those exchanged with China.¹⁰⁰⁵ Cooperation in ship construction continued, and Yugoslavia supplied both spare parts and maintenance for Soviet weapons.¹⁰⁰⁶ Although Yugoslavia mediated during the difficult days of the Ethiopian crisis in early 1977, the Sudan made clear that such mediation was welcome only because of its regard for Yugoslavia and efforts by Belgrade did not achieve success.¹⁰⁰⁷ As before Chinese and Yugoslav socialism and nonalignment appealed in theory to the Sudanese leadership and these countries' aid was welcomed. While their socialism had been particularly appealing during the 1969-1971 period, their unimpeachably non-aligned status had been most attractive during the transitional 1971-1976 period. After 1976, Chinese and Yugoslav distance from the Soviet Union in international politics, as well as their socialism and non-alignment meant that they were still viewed as appropriate partners in international relations and attractive sources of foreign assistance. Both were particularly helpful in the wake of

¹⁰⁰⁵ Arab Report and Record, December 1-31, 1977. Omdurman Domestic Service, March 18, 1978, cited in FBIS, March 23, 1978, p. 14. Arab Report and Record, October 1-15, 1978. Sudan News Agency, December 24, 1981, cited in FBIS, December 29, 1981, p. Q9.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Arab Report and Record, November 1-15, 1977. Sudan News Agency, May 5, 1981, cited in FBIS, May 6, 1981, p. Q4.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Interview with Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, Middle East News Agency, Cairo, February 16, 1977, cited in FBIS, February 17, 1977, p. 13.

hostility toward the Soviets in 1971 and again after the final expulsion of Soviet advisors in May 1977 for they were able to supply the spare parts for Soviet equipment which the U.S.S.R. would no longer sell. In the case of China, military equipment was provided without charge.

Iran

The period began with very good relations between the Sudan and the Shah's government. The Sudanese Minister of Defense visit Teheran in January and June 1977, following the Sudan's efforts to achieve a coalition of Arab states on the Red Sea, Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid reported that Iran was prepared to strengthen the defense capabilities of these Red Sea states because of the close link between the Gulf and the Red Sea and the "traditional cooperation between Iran and the Arab states."¹⁰⁰⁸

- Despite the official friendliness to the Shah, reaction in Sudanese official circles to his overthrow was mixed. While the People's Assembly hailed it, and First Vice President Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim gave a rousing salute to the change of government, there was no statement from the President himself, and the official statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in a very measured tone:

We consider that which is taking place in Iran to be a popular upheaval that had to impose itself in fraternal Iran's political and social arena in response to the Iranian people's aspirations for a sound democracy and social life. Despite our regret at the material and human losses accompanying this popular movement, we are very optimistic that peace and stability will prevail in Iran...¹⁰⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰⁸ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 25, 1977, cited in FBIS, January 28, 1977, p. 15. Interview with Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, Qatar News Agency, Doha, June 5, 1977, cited in FBIS, June 8, 1977, p. 12.

Approaches to the Ayatollah Khomeini from President Nimeiri were made through "reconciled" members of the former Sudanese opposition. Sadeq al Mahdi met the Ayatollah in London in December 1978, just before his triumphant return to Teheran and told him of his personal support for "a revolution whose aim we take to be the revival of Islam in a modern context."¹⁰¹⁰ While it is not clear whether Sadeq's meeting was at the behest of President Nimeiri, it was reported that the Sudanese President had sent "reconciled" Muslim Brother leader Hassan al Turabi, now Assistant Secretary-General of the SSU for Information and Foreign Affairs, to meet with Khomeini in June 1979.¹⁰¹¹

The Sudan's moderately friendly attitude toward the Ayatollah's government in Iran changed dramatically following the taking of the American diplomatic hostages and the outbreak of war between Iran and Iraq. The first reaction to the hostage crisis, from the People's Assembly, was quite mild; it was reported that the parliamentarians mindful of the suffering borne by the fraternal Iranian people under the Shah's regime, appeal to the brothers in Iran to release the hostages out of humanitarian considerations...¹⁰¹²

¹⁰⁰⁹ Sudan News Agency, February 13, 1979, cited in FBIS, February 15, 1979, p. 17. Sudan News Agency, February 12, 1979, cited in FBIS, February 15, 1979, p. 16. Sudan News Agency, February 12, 1979, cited in FBIS, February 14, 1979, p. 19.

¹⁰¹⁰ Reuter, January 8, 1979, cited in Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1979.

¹⁰¹¹ Middle East News Agency, June 22, 1979, cited by Arab Report and Record, July 1-15, 1979.

¹⁰¹² Omdurman Domestic Service, December 29, 1979, cited in FBIS, December 31, 1979, p. 11.

President Nimeiri's own statement a few days later, was much more negative:

Most of what has happened in Iran has nothing to do with Islamic principles ... Iran has begun to disintegrate... Disintegration is foreign to Islam ... In diplomatic custom, if a state discovers that a spy is operating within a diplomatic mission, it has no right to try him but only to expell him...¹⁰¹³

Another mission by Sadeq al Mahdi took place at the end of January 1980, apparently in regard to the hostage crisis, but there were no reported results of the trip.¹⁰¹⁴

If the growing dependence upon the United States, and American wrath at the Iranian seizure of its diplomats, was not enough to turn President Nimeiri fully against the Khomeini regime, the conflict between Iraq and Iran was decisive. The Sudan's initial reaction to the Iraqi attack had been a call for peace for the benefit of both sides, but as the conflict wore on, the Sudan joined the Arab mainstream in condemning Iran and calling for full support of Iraq:

Initially we said this war should be stopped for the best interests of both...then we discovered that Iran didn't even deserve such a stand...all the Arab states should support Iraq.¹⁰¹⁵

The fortunes of the war turned increasingly against Iraq, and solidarity with Iraq gave both Egypt and the Sudan the opportunity to join the Saudis and other Arab states of the Gulf in supporting Arab Iraq against Persian Iran, whose supporters included Egypt's and

¹⁰¹³ Interview of President Nimeiri, Al Hawadith, London, January 4, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 10, 1980, p. P14.

¹⁰¹⁴ Omdurman Domestic Service, January 17, 1980, cited in FBIS, January 18, 1980, p. 17.

¹⁰¹⁵ Interview with President Nimeiri, Al Hawadith, London, October 9, 1981, cited in FBIS, October 20, 1981, pp. Q8-11.

Sudan's most virulent enemy in the Arab world -- Libya. Sudanese enmity toward Iran grew and in June 1982 the Sudanese government expelled the Iranian diplomatic mission, giving its members four days to leave.¹⁰¹⁶

CONCLUSION

At the end of June 1972 the Sudan appeared to be in an extremely critical position -- far worse than at any time in its modern history. Having failed to establish regime legitimacy either through viable political institutions or effective policies, the Nimeiri regime appeared to be both unstable and unpopular. The economy was in a disastrous condition, with the foreign debt almost \$8 billion, the government unable even to keep up with debt service payments, and essential commodities often either unavailable or priced beyond the means of all but the wealthy.

Foreign policy had become personalized to the point where it appeared to be no more than the international projection of the personal fears, dislikes, and affections of President Nimeiri, who had clearly become isolated from disagreeable political realities. The Sudan was perceived domestically, regionally and internationally as a creature of the Egyptian and American governments, upon which it appeared to depend to a major extent. Its traditional role as a mediator in African and Arab politics was impossible under these conditions and it found itself isolated with Egypt on the major debates within the Arab League and the OAU. The government which had

¹⁰¹⁶ Sudan News Agency, June 12, 1982, cited in FBIS, June 12, 1982, pp. Q4-5.

started out as a "new broom" in 1969, with strong domestic support, was now perceived as far more corrupt and unpopular than that which it had replaced. Far more than the Abboud regime, when the phrase was first used, the Sudan had become the "sick man of Africa."

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

In the thirteen years since the coup d'etat of May 25, 1969 there have been three distinct periods of Sudanese politics. Each was characterized by different patterns of foreign policy, in terms both of decision-making and policy outcomes. A number of patterns relevant to foreign policy-making in the Sudan in particular and developing countries in general are clarified by analysis of these three phases of Sudanese foreign policy as the outcome of a process in which decision-makers respond to domestic and external factors according to their own perceptions of these two environments and their own political priorities.

In the first phase, May 1969 through July 1969, the Sudan was ruled by a Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) of six to nine officers and one civilian. More or less peers in power, the members of the RCC were also relatively similar in their approaches to foreign and domestic politics: all were leftists of some variety, eager for a resolution of the southern Sudan conflict, favoring close relations with the Soviet Union and its allies, and with the majority showing strong attachment to Egypt.¹⁰¹⁷ The foreign policy decision-making process was collegial: decisions were made within the RCC in collaboration with the two successive Foreign Ministers (the first of

¹⁰¹⁷ The varying degrees of their Arab nationalism was one of the major the differences between the two communists on the RCC and the others, so the ten RCC members could not be said to have agreed on this, but after the November 1970 purge of the RCC, the rest shared some degree of Arab nationalism.

whom was an RCC member, and the second a close associate of the RCC members). No one RCC member outweighed the others in the process. The outcome of this process was a policy which was both consistent and generally focussed on external issues rather than on domestic politics, except for African policy which was primarily based on the need to resolve the southern conflict.

The failed communist coup d'etat of July 19-21, 1971 ushered in another period of Sudanese politics which was characterized by a turning away from collegial rule and ideology in both domestic and foreign policy. As the powerful former members of the RCC left government they were replaced as decision-makers by a small number of cabinet ministers, foremost among whom was Foreign Minister Mansour Khalid, who made foreign policy in conjunction with Jaafar Nimeiri, now President of the Sudan and the sole authoritative figure in the system. The conceptual guidelines of foreign policy also changed, moving from ideological concerns for socialism and anti-imperialism to pragmatic interest in two key domestic issues: economic development and the achievement and consolidation of a resolution to the southern conflict. The Sudan cultivated closer relations with the Arab and African "conservatives," but without sacrificing good relations with its old "radical" friends from the 1969-1971 period. Although two voices were sometimes heard in foreign policy (the more direct being that of the President, the more diplomatic that of the Foreign Minister), the outcome of the foreign policy process was relatively consistent, without abrupt changes in foreign policy. Relations with the West improved, and this was followed by some degree of rapprochement with the Soviet bloc. Although foreign policy was

primarily a response to domestic problems of national unity and economic development, there was still multi-dimensional interest in other nations: the superpowers, the Arab oil producers and Europe were seen primarily in terms of the aid they could provide for the Sudan, but there appeared to be genuine interest in balanced relations with East and West as an end itself. The flowering of relations with such nations as the People's Republic of China, Yugoslavia and Romania were connected with the aid these nations could provide, but Sudanese policy also appeared to have as a major component the cultivation of close relations with nations which were steering a foreign policy course somewhere between the two superpowers.

In July 1976 the Nimeiri regime was confronted with forces both infiltrated from Libya and from within the Sudan in an attack which had elements of both a coup and an invasion. The regime survived, but the concepts of national unity and economic development were replaced as the informing principles of Sudanese foreign policy by an obsessive concern for the security of the regime. The last powerful Foreign Minister, and other influential ministers, had been removed from their key decision-making positions in January 1975, and after that date there appears to have been no figure other than the President himself who exercised decisive power in foreign policy. There were still a few potentially powerful figures on the political scene, but by 1979 even they had disappeared and the President was surrounded by a more or less apolitical, unpopular and powerless "palace guard." In this phase the Sudan moved steadily closer to the United States as a source of military and economic support. Policy toward Egypt vacillated in the wake of Sadat's evolving relationship with Israel and in the face

of severe Arab pressure on the Sudan to move to condemn Sadat, but when threatened Nimeiri was willing to sacrifice any Arab connections to depend once again upon the security of Egyptian support. As the period ended, relations between Egypt and the Sudan were closer than at any time since independence in 1956, but the relationship of peers which had to a certain extent characterized intimate Sudanese-Egyptian relations in 1969-1971 had been replaced by a clearly dependent relationship.

An examination of Sudanese foreign policy -- the process by which it was made and the outcome of the process -- within the context both of the domestic politics of the period under study as well as of foreign and domestic politics before 1969 suggests three interrelated sets of patterns and conclusions. Two groups of conclusions are related to the Sudan in particular: patterns and conclusions concerning the impact of domestic and external factors on Sudanese foreign policy. These conclusions appear to be appropriate to the Sudan alone, as they are indicted by factors which are intrinsic to the historical, geographical, political and economic conditions of the Sudan. A third set of conclusions appear to be relevant to a larger frame of reference: foreign policy-making in developing nations and political performance in military regimes in such countries.

THE EFFECT OF DOMESTIC FACTORS ON SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY

Domestic factors have been far more significant determinants of Sudanese foreign policy than have external factors, which have appeared to influence policy-making only in conjunction with the predominant internal variables.

The first and most important domestic factor in Sudanese foreign policy goes back to the independence of the Sudan: Except for the 1969-1971 period, the decision-makers in Sudanese foreign policy have been concerned with domestic power politics to the virtual exclusion of serious attention to foreign policy questions. The major exception to this is the twenty-six month period immediately following the coup d'etat of May 1969, in which the RCC's ideological concerns led to the most intense focus on foreign policy since independence and the clearest foreign policy of the entire 1956-1982 period. Even during the other most distinctive period of foreign policy -- the "radical" foreign policy of the "transitional governments" of 1964-1965 following the October Revolution -- foreign policy was a matter of almost complete unconcern to the government, which was obsessed with such pressing domestic questions as the upcoming elections and the southern conflict.

While linkage between domestic and foreign policies is characteristic of all modern nation-states, the degree to which Sudanese politicians since independence have ignored foreign relations except as a tool of internal power politics is remarkable. There is no way to ascertain why this is so, but it is not unlikely that Sudanese history in the twentieth century inculcated in the Sudanese political

culture the notion that foreign powers are the little more than the adjuncts of domestic power struggles. The effect of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium of 1898-1956, and the fashion in which Sudanese politicians played off Egypt and Britain against each other in the struggle for independence, may have been the decisive factors.

A second, and consequent, conclusion is that Sudanese obsession with domestic politics at the expense of foreign policy has resulted in foreign policies which are either inconsistent or indistinct. During the democratic periods of 1956-58 and 1965-69 (with the exception of the transitional governments of 1964-65 mentioned above) the government was composed of two or more quarreling coalition partners whose obsession with domestic politics led them to fight as fiercely against their own coalition partners as they did against the "opposition" groups. Foreign policy under these conditions was either a bone of contention among the coalition partners or, more usually, the lowest common denominator among them. The foreign policy of these periods was indistinct because the coalitions could agree on very few issues, most of these uncontroversial, and these points of agreement became the foreign policy.

Although the 1971-76 period was characterized by a more introverted foreign policy -- a policy focused primarily on internal problems of unity and development -- it was not a period in which there appeared to be the same obsession with domestic power politics that characterized the post-1976 period. After 1976, however, the President's concern for the political future of his regime and the lack of input in the decision-making process by anyone else resulted

in an increasingly inconsistent foreign policy as his foreign relationships were little more than tactics to prevent the toppling of his government, and there was no one to check the making of policy as mere personal whim.

A third conclusion related to the effect of domestic factors on Sudanese foreign policy is that Sudanese policy-makers' relationship with, and perception of, Egypt has tended to be the key to Sudanese policy within the Arab world since 1969. It does not appear to be Egypt itself which is of importance in this regard, but the Sudanese view of Egypt. The personal relationship between Sudanese and Egyptian politicians, and the deeply-rooted historical, ethnic and cultural links between the two countries have been the major factors in Sudanese relations with the outside world since long before independence. The element which has predominated since 1969, however, is the perception of the majority of the RCC, and of the President alone after the dissolution of the RCC, that Egypt is the one nation that the Sudanese government can rely upon. The term used by one scholar to describe the relationship since 1969 (and even more particularly since 1978) -- "Finlandization" -- is strong, but accurate.¹⁰¹⁸ There appears to be only a limited range of options which Nimeiri has been willing to take in the face of Egyptian provocation or pressure to move away from Egypt: diplomatic relations are never broken and personal contacts continue regardless of the appearance of total estrangement.

¹⁰¹⁸ Muhammad Beshir Hamid, "Finlandization of Sudanese Foreign Policy."

Less pro-Egyptian governments before 1969 were inclined sometimes to see Egypt itself as a threat, but since the May 1969 coup d'etat, Egypt has never been perceived except as an asset to regime security. Since 1976 Egypt has become one of the main security assets of the regime. Whenever threatened (as in July 1976 by Libya, January 1977 by Ethiopia, and 1981 by Libya), Nimeiri moves closer to Egypt. The fact that Libya in particular, as well as Ethiopia, are viewed with hostility in Cairo adds to the support which the Egyptian government would naturally supply to its ally in Khartoum.

A fourth conclusion is clear: most Sudanese governments have based their policy toward African nations in general and their neighbors in particular on concerns arising from the situation in the southern Sudan. The only exceptions to this rule during the whole of Sudanese history since independence are the transitional governments of 1964-65, which in its revolutionary fervor and its general lack of interest in foreign policy allowed transshipments of arms to the Eritrean separatists and the Congolese Simbas, and the Nimeiri government since 1976. To the extent that the parliamentary governments of 1956-58 and 1965-69 were interested in Africa at all, they attempted to maintain good relations with the African states, particularly the Sudan's neighbors, in the interests of supporting the Sudanese central government's policy in the south. The policy of the Abboud government (1958-1964) toward Africa was wholly a result of a concern to maintain a low profile in Africa to avoid allowing African states a pretext for meddling in the southern Sudan issue.

African policy during the first two phases of the Nimeiri government (1969-1971 and 1971-1976) was also predicated on the government's efforts to resolve the southern conflict. After 1976, however, Nimeiri's eagerness to preserve the status quo in the southern Sudan seemed to diminish sharply. Not only did he seem willing to overturn the arrangements reached in the 1972 Addis Ababa accord in his domestic plans for decentralization, but his foreign policy was now attuned wholly to his regime's political future regardless of any other concern. Policy toward Africa and particularly toward the African neighbors was now based on the degree to which they represented either a direct threat (as with Ethiopia) or the friend of an enemy (the African supporters of Libya's Qadafi).

THE EFFECT OF EXTERNAL FACTORS ON SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY

External factors have played only a subsidiary role in the formulation of Sudanese foreign policy.

External threat does not appear to be a major factor in foreign policy up to July 1976, and tensions with neighboring states after that were evaluated not in terms of real threat but were perceived through the "lens" of highly personalized foreign policy. Other than more or less covert aid to the southern rebels, there were no serious external threats to the Sudan until after June 1976 and the response to external threats was a curious inclination to publicly ignore the serious threat from Ethiopia and make much of the more or less illusory threat from Libya for reasons related to domestic politics. The growing tension between Qadafi and Nimeiri after 1976 appears to

be a product of the increasing personalization of the foreign policies of both states. The potentially more serious provocations from Ethiopia after 1976, however, cannot be discounted and appear to be the only genuine external threat to the Nimeiri regime. Strangely enough, however, the genuine potential damage to the Sudan which could be wrought by a hostile Ethiopia has been virtually ignored by Nimeiri publicly relative to the continuous emphasis on the threat presumably posed by Qadafi. Although hostile Libyan forces in Chad may have posed a possible threat to the Sudan, it is unlikely that the several thousand Libyan soldiers in Chad could have been more than a border irritant to the Sudan. After the Libyan evacuation of Chad, the threat posed by Qadafi appeared even more unlikely: hundreds of miles of virtually uninhabited desert lie between the area of Libya nearest to the Sudan and nearest significant Sudanese cities or installations.

Publicly ignoring the real potential threat from Ethiopia and complaining constantly of an illusory threat from Libya may indicate that external threat itself is relatively unimportant in current Sudanese foreign policy. Highly publicizing a threat which straightforward geographical factors deny can only be a product of some combination of three possible factors: (1) desire to play up to the Reagan Administration's efforts to underline both Qadafi's role as an international trouble-maker and Reagan's intention to support "friendly" nations world-wide, to push the US to provide increased military and economic assistance; (2) a manifestation of the pervasive personalization of Sudanese politics, to the extent that Qadafi -- Nimeiri's greatest personal enemy -- is transformed into the enemy of the entire nation; and (3) the traditional effort to distract the population from domestic woes by exaggerating external threats.

The superpower rivalry in the northeast African region is only an indirect factor in Sudanese foreign policy, but it has made it difficult for Sudanese governments to genuinely follow the non-aligned policy to which they have all paid lip-service and has led to a perception of relations with the superpowers by Sudanese governments as a zero-sum game. Obsessed as they have tended to be by domestic politics, most Sudanese governments have perceived the two superpowers as little more than a source, or potential source, of assistance or an ally in individual parties' or politicians' road to power. While the government of 1969-1971 was pro-Soviet and anti-Western by choice, based on their view of Western imperialism, policy toward the superpowers even in this period was zero-sum: friendship toward one of the two superpowers was matched by hostility toward the other. This became even clearer in subsequent phases. Policy toward the United States became considerably more positive in 1971-1976, and, after recovering from the initial hostility over the July 1971 coup attempt, policy toward the Soviets rebounded. But Sudanese policy toward neither of the two superpowers during this period was as positive as toward the Soviets in 1969-1971 or the Americans in 1976-1982. The only way left for the Sudan to manifest its imaginary "non-alignment" was its growing relationship with the PRC, which was also a source of high-quality, unconditional aid. Sudanese policy toward the two superpowers since 1969 has been either pro-Soviet and anti-American, or anti-Soviet and pro-American, or in the transition between these two positions without intimate relations with either one.

The changing configuration of Arab world politics also exercises an indirect influence on Sudanese foreign policy, but only in conjunction

with the powerful factor of Sudanese perception of relations with Egypt. Historically Sudanese governments have been most comfortable taking a middle position in the Arab world. The two periods of radical foreign policy (1964-1965 and 1969-1971) saw the Sudan cultivating particularly close relations with the more radical Arab states, but in all periods the Sudan has been reluctant to quarrel with other Arab states unless provoked by questions of Sudanese sovereignty. Tensions with Saudi Arabia in 1969-1971, with Iraq in 1972, and with Libya starting in 1976 clearly resulted from Sudanese perception of these nations' interference in Sudanese domestic politics. Sudanese hostility to the Arab opponents of Egypt after the Sudan moved back to support of Sadat in March 1981 appeared also to be based more on a reaction to these nations' criticism of the Sudan itself than on their failure to support Egypt.

Up to the months immediately following the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of March 1979 Nimeiri was able to steer a course between Egypt and its Arab critics by the tactic of "disengaging" the Sudan's bilateral ties with Egypt and the other Arab nations from its support of Sadat on a multilateral level. After March 1979, the pressure on the Sudan from the Arab states grew. After the threat of the Sudanese opposition forces in Libya was removed, however, the Sudan reacted to Arab pressure by moving away from Egypt -- but not too far. Once there was a perceived threat of hostile Libyan forces in Chad in March 1981, the issues of inter-Arab politics no longer had any salience to Nimeiri, who moved back to intimacy with Egypt to insure regime security.

PATTERNS OF SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY WITH RELEVANCE TO OTHER STATES

There are several patterns which emerge from this examination of Sudanese foreign policy which are likely to be relevant to other developing nations as well. The influence of the size of the decision-making group on the consistency, direction and personalization of foreign policy is a pattern which is likely to occur, or have occurred, in a number of developing nations where an oligarchical decision-making system gives way to rule by one man. The predominance of sovereignty issues and patterns of performance in foreign and domestic politics by the military regime in the Sudan may also reinforce observations made about military regimes in developing nations as a group.

As the size of the foreign policy decision-making group dwindled from ten equal RCC members, to the President and a powerful Foreign Minister, and finally to the President alone, there were significant changes in the foreign policy in terms of consistency, focus, and personalization.

The contrast in foreign policy consistency between the first period, 1969-1971, and the last of the three periods examined in this research, 1976-1982, is very clear. Consistency refers to a pattern of foreign policy toward one foreign actor or one group of foreign actors within a single period which follows a single and relatively predictable line of reasoning, whether based on policies of previous periods or on the new policy established at the beginning of the period in question. A consistent foreign policy does not mean that the policy does not change, but merely that changes appear to be

evolutionary and of some duration rather than abrupt and ephemeral switches in position.

Foreign policy during the period from May 1969 to July 1971 was consistent. In the zero sum game which characterized policy toward the superpowers after 1969, there was unremitting friendship toward the Soviet bloc and equal hostility toward the United States and, to a lesser extent, West Germany, based on the RCC's concerns for the Arab cause, anti-imperialism, and "socialist" solidarity. Policy toward the Arab world followed parallel lines, based on adherence to Nasser's line in the Arab-Israeli conflict and participation in the radical Arab camp. Policy in Africa also did not change during this period: while friendship was sought with the African "radicals," good relations were sought with the neighboring states (especially Ethiopia and Uganda), regardless of their ideological orientation, in order to facilitate the RCC's plan to resolve the southern conflict.

The period from July 1971 to July 1976 was a transitional period in foreign policy. The decision-making pattern changed from the oligarchical rule of 1969-1971 to the one-man rule of 1976-1982, and the years from 1971-76 period was generally characterized itself by the rule of a President with full power and authority who shared foreign policy-making with a Foreign Minister to whom he granted considerable power. The foreign policy was somewhat less distinctive than in the previous period, and almost as consistent, though with a lower profile. Usually there was a harder line (for example on the Soviet Union or Ethiopia) from the President than from the Foreign Minister, but there were no dramatic departures from the policy

established at the beginning of the period. Slow evolutions took place in relations with the two superpowers, and problems erupted with Egypt in late 1972 but these are explained by circumstances.

After July 1976, when the President alone was making foreign policy and concern for regime security had replaced both the ideological bases of the first period and the civil and economic concerns of the 1971-1976 period, Sudanese foreign policy began to show signs of serious inconsistency, to the extent that the term "policy" may have been no longer appropriate to describe the pattern of the Sudan's foreign relations, given the strategic and long-term implications of the word. There were two ways in which President Nimeiri's inconsistency was manifested: through "reinterpretations" of policy that utterly changed the meaning of the policy in question, and through a kind of willfull amnesia in which past statements of policy were ignored as though they had never been said.

Inconsistencies appeared to result from two, related phenomena. With decision-making concentrated in one man, there were no institutional or other checks on the policy. Secondly, with the imperiled status of the regime, and with the only basis of foreign policy the axiom of survival, policy was changed whenever it could better serve that end. Clearly the demands of political survival on a tactical level require quicker, and more dramatic shifts in foreign policy than strategic concerns for ideology or for civil order and economic development.

Three major manifestations of the new inconsistency in Sudanese foreign policy were the policy adopted toward Camp David and the

Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, the policy toward the question of superpower military "facilities" in the Sudan, and the policy toward Eritrean self-determination. All three were matters of major concern and Sudanese inconsistency on these questions could only have revealed to the other parties concerned that the Sudan could no longer be counted on for even relatively consistent, reasoned responses to international events.

Nimeiri's response to Sadat's changing relationship with Israel veered from firm support of Sadat's policies to condemnation of them, and back to full support. The Sudan praised Sadat's trip to Jerusalem in November 1977 and took a supportive, but still somewhat ambivalent, position on the Camp David Accords. Buffeted by conflicting pressures from the Arab states and Egypt following the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of March 1979, Nimeiri began leaning away from support of Sadat in April 1979 and after the threat of the Ansar fighters in Libya had been removed in May 1979, he began to fall into line behind virtually the rest of the Arab world. In August 1979 Nimeiri cast his lot with the Arab League opponents of Egypt at the Tunis Arab League Summit and by the end of 1979 had removed his ambassador from Cairo, without, however, cutting diplomatic relations with Egypt. As Sudanese policy changed, past statements of support were reinterpreted as condemnation. The value of the ambiguous response to Camp David was seen in its capacity to be reinterpreted to suit an entirely different policy line. No sooner had a potential threat appeared in the form of Libyan troops on the Sudanese-Chadi border, however, than Nimeiri returned to the safety of the Egyptian fold in March 1981. This time there was little effort -- or perhaps little point -- in trying to

reinterpreted the Sudan's initial response to Sadat's relationship with Israel for a second time, so the renewed intimacy had more the quality of a foreign policy based on a convenient political amnesia: no mention was made of there having been any changes in policy.

The other two major inconsistencies were perhaps even more clear because they were major departures not only from Sudanese policy since 1969, but from Sudanese policy since Independence. Neither the President's statement of support for Eritrean "independence" in January 1977 nor his offer of military facilities to the United States in March 1981 were indications of what Nimeiri's policy really was. Neither was assumed by Sudanese Foreign Ministry officials to be serious expressions of policy and both were reinterpreted or ignored in subsequent statements. The offer of "military facilities" was very quickly reworded in a statement by the Sudanese Embassy in Saudi Arabia to mean that the Sudan was interested in American-built military facilities for the Sudanese army, to be used under Sudanese control -- something quite different from the President's original statement.

Support for Eritrean "independence," apparently a result of overwhelming Ethiopian provocations, took almost a year to disappear from Nimeiri's political vocabulary. The Foreign Minister and other Foreign Ministry officials did not feel that the President's statement supporting Eritrean independence was really a manifestation of what the President wanted to see in Eritrea, but only an impulsive outburst by the President. Regardless of intent, statements from a President who holds absolute power must be regarded as "policy," despite the inconsistency with past and subsequent positions.

Another apparent result of the diminished size of the decision-making group, coupled with growing fears for the security of the regime, was the narrowing of the focus of the Sudanese foreign policy that occurred over the years since 1969. The outward, radical orientation of foreign policy in May 1969 shifted after July 1971 to primary concern for resolving the southern conflict and achieving economic development. The conceptual base for foreign policy after 1976 was even narrower. Foreign policy after 1976 was geared to the security of the regime itself and the political survival of the President. This narrow focus helped make the foreign policy after 1976 less consistent. A policy which rests on a single tactical objective, which has no long-term goals other than keeping a regime in power, is unlikely to be as consistent a policy which has certain clear goals or ideological foundations.

A third characteristic which appears to be related to the shift in the decision-making pattern is the increased personalization of foreign policy which went along with its decreased consistency and its narrowing focus. After 1976, the foreign policy of the Sudan became very clearly the foreign policy of Jaafar Nimeiri, and the style of the policy clearly reflected the President's personal feelings about other nations and heads of state. While the rhetoric of foreign policy in the Arab world is often more personal than is common in the West, the language aimed at, for example, Libya's Qadafi, was more expressive of a personal attitude than a state-to-state relationship. While such personalization of foreign policy is a growing phenomenon these days, the dangers of it to a relatively weak country like the Sudan should be obvious. The head of state who makes personal threats

against another head of state, and whose foreign policy is grossly inconsistent on major issues, is unlikely to be taken seriously at a regional and international level. This may not pose problems for heads of state like Libya's Qaddafi, who have the wealth to ignore their own and their country's international reputation. For a developing country like the Sudan, however, with the most serious economic problems, not being taken seriously by potential donor states is not a minor problem.

Although military regimes come to power with the notion that military efficiency can be applied successfully to the political and economic problems of the whole nation, the case of the Sudan suggests that military governments succeed no better than any other type of regime in dealing either with domestic political and economic problems or with the demands of foreign policy. Political thinkers as long ago as de Toqueville have surmised that authoritarian regimes have an intrinsic advantage in foreign policy-making: because they are unconstrained by the demands of a vocal constituency, a legislature and elections, they can make foreign policy more swiftly, more secretly and with greater consistency than democratic governments. There is no evidence in the Sudanese example to suggest that this is true. While the foreign policy of the democratic regimes of 1956-1958 and 1965-1969 was very indistinct because it had perforce to be to lowest common denominator of the diverse views of quarrelsome coalition partners, in fact the least consistent foreign policy since Sudanese Independence was that of the Nimeiri government after 1976, the most authentically authoritarian period of Sudanese politics. Swiftmess and secrecy are not particularly important factors in the

foreign policy of small states in the scheme of international power, but consistency is a factor which is certainly taken into consideration by other international actors.

Another generally applicable phenomenon illustrated by an examination of Sudanese foreign policy is that questions of national sovereignty supersede all other interests, international bonds or commitments, no matter what the ideological orientation of the regime in power, regardless of the internal ethnic, linguistic or tribal diversity of the country, and despite the strength of any foreign relationships. In the case of the Sudan there was no point at which a question of sovereignty was subordinated to any other concern. The ideological ardor of the RCC in 1969 did not outweigh the need to resolve the southern conflict in the framework of a united Sudan, and so relationships with "conservative" African neighbors were openly sought. The intimate bond with Egypt did not prevent the Sudan taking matters to the UN and other international agencies during the 1958 Halayib confrontation and after the 1972 Libyan airplanes incident.

CONCLUSION

In the end the conclusions that can be drawn from the Sudan's foreign policy give rise to some pessimism about foreign policies of developing nations. Despite the relatively hopeful economic, political and social landscape that existed when the Sudan became independent, no government has succeeded in providing stable and responsible rule or long-term economic prosperity for the Sudan.

Except for the two periods of ideological rule -- the transitional governments of 1964-65 and the rule of the RCC in 1969-1971 -- Sudanese foreign policies have been little more than reflections of the sorry state of Sudan domestic politics.

Taking an overview of the various regimes which have ruled the Sudan since independence, the governments of only four periods could be characterized as having a distinctive and relatively consistent foreign policy. One of these governments, the transitional regimes of 1964-65, is probably an aberrant case of decision-making, unlikely to be repeated, because it was the period immediately following a popular revolution overthrowing a military government. Foreign policy decision-making by the very diverse elements of the national coalition government of the time was dominated more by the "spirit of the times" than the agreement of the ministers, and foreign policy was overshadowed by domestic issues in any case. The other three periods in which a distinctive and consistent foreign policy appeared were the six years of the Abboud government, the period of RCC rule from May 1969 through July 1971, and the subsequent 1971-1976 period. Each of these periods falls somewhere between the two extremes of parliamentary rule and one-man rule and each is distinctive for the presence of a strong Foreign Minister with his own ideas about foreign policy.

This suggests that in terms of foreign policy, at least, neither parliamentary nor one-man rule has been very fruitful for the Sudan. The political insecurity of individual politicians and parties during the parliamentary periods led them to use foreign policy only as a

tool in their quarrels with each other. The insecurity of an increasingly unpopular dictator has led Nimeiri to use foreign policy as little more than another weapon in the arsenal of regime security. For very different reasons, neither system appears to produce the kind of consistent, distinctive foreign policy which may be essential for a developing country with critical economic and technical needs. In the absence of the kind of lasting political institutions which the Sudan has never had, a strong Foreign Minister appears to be the minimal condition for a consistent and distinctive foreign policy. A system in which foreign policy-making is the prerogative neither of diverse and quarrelsome coalition partners, nor of a single man who rules without peers, appears to provide the optimal conditions for foreign policy-making in the Sudan.

The prospects for the future do not seem bright. Generations of Sudanese politicians have given a low priority to foreign policy as well as to internal political and economic development. Foreign policy has been used by most Sudanese governments to advance personal or partisan interests, but rarely to further the interests of the nation as a whole. In the present day, Nimeiri's undivided attention to the goal of short-term survival has undermined the competence, integrity, and reputation of the Sudanese government as a political and administrative body. His overt dependence on Egyptian support has created a regional and international perception of the Sudan as little more than an appendage of Egypt. By July 1982, the Sudanese economy and political structure were in the worst state possible short of complete chaos. Ironically, Nimeiri's obsession with regime security, to the detriment of serious attention to economic problems, has

endangered his regime far more than any domestic or external security threat. There is little hope that a consistent, reasoned foreign policy capable of attracting desperately-needed foreign aid and expertise can emerge from such a situation, but without substantial foreign assistance to the Sudanese economy there is every likelihood that the Sudan will descend into domestic instability and economic ruin.

Appendix A

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED*

All interviews were conducted in Khartoum between March and November, 1981, unless otherwise noted.

1. All surviving officers of the RCC.
2. Twenty officials of the Foreign Ministry, primarily Ambassadors and Heads of Departments.
3. Ahmad Abdel Halim member of SSU Political Bureau
Deputy Minister of Information and
Culture, 1971-1972
SSU Secretary for Ideological and
Procedural Affairs
Minister of Culture and Information,
1975-1976
SSU Assistant Secretary-General for
Information and Foreign Affairs,
1976
3. Dr. Ahmad Al Sayyid (before 1969, People's Democratic
Hamid Party and later Democratic
Unionist Party Secretary-General,

- Minister of Irrigation and
Minister of Commerce)
Minister of Telecommunications,
1979?? - 1981
4. Ahmad Ibrahim Diraij (before 1969, Minister of Labor and
Cooperatives)
Governor of Darfur
5. Ahmad Abdel Rahman Minister of Internal Affairs,
1980??- present
6. Ahmad Suleiman (before 1969, Member of Parliament and
Minister of Agriculture)
Ambassador to the USSR, 1969
Minister of Economy and Foreign
Trade, 1969-1970
Minister of Justice 1971-1973
Ambassador to the UK, 1973-1975
SSU Central Committee member
People's Assembly, Foreign Affairs
Committee
7. Babikir Awadallah (before 1969 Speaker of the
House of Representatives, leader of the
Professional Front in October 1964,
and Chief Justice)
Prime Minister, 1969
Foreign Minister, 1969-1970
RCC member, ex officio, 1969
Deputy Prime Minister and
Deputy RCC Chairman, 1969-1971

- First Vice President, 1971-1972
SSU Political Bureau member
8. Farouk Abu Isa
Minister of State for Premier's
Office and for Foreign Affairs,
1969-1970
Minister of Labor, 1970
Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1970-1971
9. Dr. Francis Deng
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs,
1976-1980 (interviewed in Ottawa,
Canada in February 1981)
10. Dr. Hassan al Turabi
Assistant SSU Secretary-General for
Information and Foreign Affairs
Attorney-General, 1979 - present
SSU Political Bureau member
11. Ismail al Haj Moussa
Minister of State for Information
and Culture, 1976-1979
Minister of Culture and Information
1979-1981
12. Izzeddin Hamid
Minister of State for the Presidency,
1976
Minister of State for Egyptian Affairs,
1976-1979
Minister of Industry, 1980-1981
13. Gen. Jaafar Mohamed
Nimeiri
President of the Sudan,
RCC member, Secretary-General and
(later) President of the SSU,
with other portfolios at various
times.

14. Jemal Mohamed Ahmad Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, 1975-1976
Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1976-1977
15. Dr. Mansour Khalid Minister of Youth and Sports, 1969-1970
Permanent Representative to the UN, 1970-1971
Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1971-1975
Minister of Education, 1975-1976
Presidential Advisor on Foreign Affairs and Coordinator of Administrative Office of the Presidency, 1976-1977
Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1977
SSU Political Bureau member
16. Moawiya Ibrahim Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, 1970-1971
Minister of Labor, 1971
17. Mohamed Mirghani Mubarak Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, 1979-1981
Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1981 - present
18. Mohamed Ali Shash Governor of Kassala Province
19. Brig. Muzzamil Suleiman Minister of Interior, 1975-1976
Ghandour (ret.)
20. Maj. Gen. Omer Mohamed Al Tayyib Chief of National Security (cabinet rank), 1977 - present
First Vice President, 1982 - present
21. Dr. Osman Abu al Gasim Minister of Cooperation and Rural

- Development, 1969-1972
SSU Political Bureau member
22. Rashid al Taher Bakr (before 1969, Minister of Animal Resources, Justice)
Ambassador to Libya, 1971
SSU Political Bureau member
People's Assembly member, (Speaker, 1975-1976)
Prime Minister, 1976-1977
Foreign Minister, 1977-1980
Vice President, 1977-1980
SSU Political Bureau member
23. Lt. Col. Salah Abdel Aal Mabrouk (ret.) Minister of Youth, Sports and Social Affairs, 1971-1973
Minister of Presidential Affairs, 1973-1975
Minister of Egyptian Affairs, 1975
SSU Political Bureau member
24. Sirr al Khatim al Khalifah (before 1969 Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, Ambassador to Italy, Ambassador to the UK)
Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, 1972-1973
Minister of Education, 1973-1975
25. Yehya Abdel Mageed Minister of Irrigation and Hydro-electric Power, 1971-1980 (when Ministry of Irrigation changed to sub-cabinet level 1973-1977, he was Minister of State for Irrigation)

SSU Political Bureau member

26. Most former Foreign Ministers were also interviewed, including:

Ahmad Khair, Sheikh Ali Abdel Rahman, and Ibrahim al Mufti.

27. A number of political figures from previous regimes were interviewed,

including: Amin al Tom, Ali Hamed, Ahmad Mohamed Yassin, Mohamed

Tawfiq, Maccawi Suleiman Accrat, Mahmoud al Fadli, Ali Hassan

Abdallah, Al Tayyib Mohamed Khair, Nasreddin al Sayyid,

Daoud Abdel Latif, Dr. Abdel Halim Mohamed, Ibrahim Ahmad and

Generals Maqboul, Irwa, and Tala'at.

* In all cases there was an attempt to check the dates of tenure of office with the persons interviewed, but in some cases, the person himself was no longer certain of the precise dates involved.

Appendix B

MEMBERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL (RCC)

Name	Rank (May 1969)	Batch (Mil. Coll.)	Tribe
Babikir Awadallah*	none	none	Dongolawi
Jaafar Mohamed Nimeiri	Col.	4	Dongolawi
Babikir al Nur**	Lt. Col.	7	Khandagawi/ Dongolawi
Abu al Gasim Hashim	Maj.	9	Ja'ali
Khalid Hassan Abbas	Maj.	10	Ja'ali
Farouk Osman Hamadallah**	Maj.	10	Ja'ali
Hashim al Atta**	Maj.	11	Shaigi
Abu al Gasim Mohamed Ibrahim	Maj.	13	Ja'ali
Mamoun Awad Abu Zeid	Maj.	13	Ja'ali

Zein al Abdin M. A.

Maj.

13

Mahasi

Abd al Gadir

* Babikir Awadallah, Prime Minister from May through October 1969, was an ex officio member of the RCC until made Deputy RCC Chairman in October 1969.

** Babikir al Nur, Hashim al Atta, and Farouk Osman Hamadallah were dismissed from the RCC in November 1970 and were executed in July 1971 following the coup d'etat of July 19th.

Appendix C

SUDANESE FOREIGN TRADE, 1969-1971

(as a percentage of world total)

country/region	1968		1969		1970		1971	
	exports	imports	exports	imports	exports	imports	exports	imports
US	3.4	2.2	3.5	3.0	3.6	3.1	3.3	2.5
UK	5.5	17.9	6.9	19.4	5.9	20.1	4.3	13.7
France	2.5	3.8	1.9	3.6	2.3	2.2	2.7	3.7
Italy	12.0	5.6	13.4	5.1	10.3	2.0	8.5	2.0
West Germany	15.2	5.3	12.1	6.7	10.2	7.8	6.6	6.1
Netherlands	5.3	2.6	4.1	3.8	3.5	2.8	3.6	2.6
USSR	5.9	7.1	4.7	4.9	15.7	8.6	16.0	6.8
Eastern Eur. (other than USSR)	7.9	7.6	7.6	5.7	5.4	7.7	7.0	8.7
Egypt	3.0	4.0	3.8	4.3	5.4	5.5	5.0	5.9
Saudi Arabia	3.3	na	na	.2	2.1	.2	2.7	na
Africa	.3	2.7	.3	.2	.4	2.1	1.0	1.5
PRC	6.0	6.8	7.7	5.6	5.9	4.2	9.4	6.7

Yugoslavia	1.0	.7	1.3	.9	1.3	.7	.9	1.9
India	9.8	10.6	12.6	9.9	10.8	13.3	10.5	19.6

Source: data provided in Direction of Trade, (Washington DC: IMF, 1972)

Note: IMF trade data for subsequent periods was not available for the Sudan and therefore no trade charts are provided for the post-1971 periods.

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