

CONFIDENTIAL
1041/22/55



BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

August 18, 1955.

En to:

Dear Evelyn

(2 sets on letter
by hand)

INDEXED
JE1058/140

The Sudan question is obviously the big question now, and I think that it will probably give us plenty of trouble. I suppose that the Egyptians signed the Agreement because they thought that it would enable them to achieve union. My first impression is that they regard the prestige of their régime as largely dependent upon the outcome of the Sudan issue, and that they will go a long way to achieve their aims. The most hopeful feature is that they will probably find it increasingly difficult to influence the Sudanese situation and will not be able to hold up self-determination if things look like going against them.

2. We certainly do not want to lose sight of the influence of this upon Anglo-Egyptian relations, and it will be a matter of considerable difficulty to maintain a firm position on the Sudan question and at the same time to keep our relations with Egypt friendly. My first impression is that Nasser is very much alive to this, but that Salah Salem is completely out of control. Salah took a fanatical and extreme view throughout our last interview, whereas Nasser was friendly and calm. It was, however, astonishing to find how cheerfully and openly they admit to what they have been doing, regarding it as perfectly natural, whatever may be in the agreement.

3. You will perhaps be discussing with Knox Helm whether he should go back to the Sudan a bit earlier than he had intended. He has already written that he is going back by air instead of by sea. I know that this part of the year is customarily regarded as the dead season, and that in normal circumstances the rains and the absence of everyone who matters ensure that very little can happen. This year, however, it looks as though the plebiscite question is about to come up, and it is possible that we shall have a series of issues to settle, like the Commission question, arising at intervals throughout the summer. Moreover, the Egyptians, if my last conversation with them is any guide, may now launch a vigorous attack on the Governor-General for failing to exercise his responsibility for ensuring a free and neutral atmosphere. One can argue that this is to be the principal responsibility of the Commission, and that the Governor-General's powers are in any case limited by statute. But one cannot seriously contest the view that the Governor-General, as the representative of the co-domini, should at the least exercise his influence in the spirit of the agreement, and I think that it would be a mistake to argue the point on too technical and narrow a ground.

Nasser /

C.A.E. Shuckburgh, Esq., C.B., C.M.G.,
Foreign Office,
S.W.1.

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Nasser made a pointed reference in our talk to Helm's absence in England. There has been a certain amount of comment on this in the past, and the Egyptians may make more of it in their coming campaign. I have no criticism to make against Luce, but he is not in any formal sense Helm's deputy and I gather, in any case, from recent telegrams that he too is about to go on leave (as, incidentally, is Philip Adams).

4. I realise that arrangements in Khartoum are not really my business, but on general grounds I should naturally be happier, from the point of view of dealing with the Egyptians, if Helm came back sooner rather than later, and it may be easier to present his early return in a suitable manner in public, before an Egyptian attack develops against the person of the Governor-General.

Yours ever.

Humphrey

1955

J
AFRICAN DEPARTMENT

EGYPT AND SUDAN

¹⁰⁵
JE1058/141

FROM
 Sir H. Trevelyan,
 Cairo, to Mr Bromley
 No. 10223/225/55
 Dated Aug. 25
 Received in Registry— Aug. 30

Sudan.

Comments upon the future status of the Sudan and Egyptian policy towards the Sudan.

References to former relevant papers

JE10110/35

MINUTES

Now that the Sudanese Parliament has decided to ask the Co-Lominis I think that we must accept the fact that we can only agree. An argument, which Sir Humphrey used, and which has been the chief one ^{in favour of} a plebiscite is that it would make Egyptian bribery more difficult. This is, I think, not entirely true since it would be relatively easy to bribe Electoral Officers. Moreover, supervision of any sort will be difficult enough; and especially in the South it will be fairly easy for Egyptian agents to persuade voters that the vote marked "Independence" means domination by Northeners and the vote marked "Union" means independence.

(Print)

(How disposed of)

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(Action completed)	(Index)
9/19	8/10

While in a sophisticated State it might be possible to combine elections with a plebiscite my impression is that such an attempt in the Sudan would be confusing the issue.

References to later relevant papers

J.W.P.R.ild.
 J.W.P.R. 6/9. 31/8.

10223/225/55
CONFIDENTIAL



Enter soon
BRITISH EMBASSY, J

CAIRO.

August 25, 1955.

INDEXED

JE1058/141

Dear Tom.

I am very glad that Helm was able to come here and re-establish contact with the Egyptian Government, in view of their ~~propaganda~~ about him. I had a full discussion with him. Helm is anxious that the plebiscite proposal should be dropped, and the Agreement carried out exactly as it stands. This may well be the best course if we are to avoid great difficulty in partially re-negotiating the Agreement with the Egyptian Government in their present mood. Moreover, a plebiscite in normal conditions would be difficult enough, and, in present conditions, very difficult indeed. A plebiscite has, however, one advantage, since the Egyptian Government would probably find it more difficult to influence the outcome of a plebiscite than the vote of a constituent assembly on the main issue. Deputies who had been elected to a constituent assembly on an independence ticket might well succumb to bribery before the main issue was put to it. It would not be necessary to have two separate processes, since a plebiscite and election to a constituent assembly could surely be combined.

2. I do not think that the Egyptian Government would agree to Azhari's proposal, recorded in paragraph 4 of Khartoum telegram No. 230, that the present Parliament should appoint a body to draw up a constitution after a plebiscite. They would take their present attitude that the existing Parliament is unrepresentative.

3. Should the decision, either by way of a plebiscite or by the initial action of a constituent assembly, be in favour of a constitutional link with Egypt, then a whole new set of problems would arise, as the future constitution of Egypt would also be involved and there would have to be a joint Egyptian-Sudanese body to decide, for instance, what would be the federal subjects and how they should be financed, before a purely Sudanese body could consider the area of government to be left to the Sudan Parliament. It seems doubtful, however, whether the Egyptians would ever contemplate a form of federation which would give the Sudanese a voice in Egyptian foreign and defence policy. Their ideas, which still seem vague, seem to amount to an effort to be able to influence Sudanese policy on matters which concern their interests, without the Sudanese being able to influence their policy.

4. I also discussed with Helm the probable Egyptian motives. He believes that the Egyptians have been the principal immediate cause of the trouble in the South by working on the existing North-South friction for their own purposes. Either they did not mean it to go as far as this and it got out of hand, or they deliberately set out to break up the Sudan in the hopes of delaying self-determination, when they thought that the Sudanese were determined on independence. At present we agree that the first is the more likely hypothesis. There may be something in Salah Salem's insistence that the present situation there is against Egypt's interests, and his opinion that even Egypt's friends in the North will turn against her if they come to believe that Egypt has deliberately tried to separate the North and the South.

5. I am sending a copy of this letter to Helm and Adams.

Yours ever,

Humphrey

T.E. Bromley, Esq., C.M.G.,
African Department,
Foreign Office, S.W.1.

No. 36. (10111/84/55) J
 United Kingdom Trade
 Her Majesty's Commissioner at Khartoum
 presents his compliments to H.M.P.S.S.P.A.
 and has the honour to transmit to him the under-mentioned documents.

British Office of the United Kingdom
 Trade Commissioner,
 KHARTOUM.

Reference to previous correspondence: August 25, 1955.
 Khartoum telegram number 142. JE1058/126
 Description of Enclosure

Name and Date.	Subject.
National Guidance Office Bulletin No. 899 of August 16.	Text of Sayed Yahia el Fadli's speech to Arab Press Represent- -atives and foreign News Agencies corres- -pondents. INDEXED JE1058/145

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BULLETIN NO. 899

DATE LINE : KHARTOUM 16.8.55

Text of speech delivered by Sayed Yahia El Fadli

Minister of Social Affairs in the Dinner Party held in the Prime Minister's Official Residence in Khartoum on 16.8.1955 in honour of the Arab Press Representatives and Correspondents of foreign News Agencies.

Gentlemen of the Foreign Press who have hastened to join us in our rejoicings for the birth of a new, independent and progressive Sudan making its way towards joining hands with free nations of the world which work for the promotion of civilisation and peace.

I beg to take the opportunity of our meeting tonight to thank you for taking the trouble to come to this country in order to be present at the time of the birth of a nation and to witness the constitutional proceedings which led to the historic decision for which Sudanese have been earnestly waiting. I believe that the picture of the situation as expressed by the people today will remain engraved in your memories. It is the picture of a nation that have suffered foreign rule for 55 years and have today shattered its fetters to pieces and became free.

I wish we could bring all our neighbours, the nations of the Arab World in order to take part with us in the rejoicings on this happy occasion and to see for themselves the unanimous will of the Sudanese for freedom and complete independence. I believe we have not missed this because we believe that you, gentlemen of the foreign press, will convey the true picture, as witnessed by you in Parliament today when the dividing line between Government and Opposition has been undistinguishable. The position, as stated by the Prime Minister, was that there was no Government viz Opposition but a united and unconquerable front.

The evacuation procession, again, was but a bloc with unified aims and slogans. There was no call other than evacuation and independence.

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Gentlemen,

You have today witnessed unanimity in its full sense. Those of you who remember what happened more than a year ago on the occasion of the first opening of our Parliament will no doubt feel the change in the attitude of the Sudanese. At that time there were two sections, one calling for unity with Egypt and the other for independence. I must at once say that that state was the direct result of foreign influence. But, as the nation started to free itself little by little from the yoke of foreign rule and Sudanese took up the duties previously undertaken by expatriates and as foreign influence began to dwindle gradually differences of opinion began to disappear and the people began to come closer together. We who have previously called for unity with Egypt have been horrified to observe that the authorities there have not been happy about this attitude, so much so, that we began to be suspicious of the true intentions of Egypt. The rulers of Egypt, even at the time of what they call the reactionary era, have kept telling us they are against compulsory unity. We, likewise, have been labouring under the pretence that unity means nothing short of full independence. However, the present attitude of the Egyptian authorities led us to think twice and ponder over the position of Egypt today and to consider her treaty with Great Britain whereby the British forces may, during a period of seven years after evacuation, reoccupy Egyptian territory under certain circumstances. We believe this is the very sort of treaty which Egypt deploras today.

The presidency of the republic has remained vacant for long which is an unprecedented case; Egypt does not enjoy a constitution ensuring freedoms for the individual and the community and is more or less a dictatorial regime. All this has led us to believe that we will be guilty towards our people if we were to call for anything other than full

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independence.

Gentlemen,

You have certainly seen the hundreds of thousands who gathered this morning to celebrate this historic occasion and who, led by the Prime Minister have proceeded from the Parliament to the Evacuation Square without the least incident and without the Police taking any serious measures to keep order. This is naturally a proof of the alertness and sense of responsibility of the people. The Sudanese are aware of what is going on in Egypt and are likewise aware that this is their only chance to make their choice and they have seized it.

Gentlemen,

You may be aware that the Prime Minister visited Egypt on 23rd July last, accompanied by many of his colleagues. His object was to give a clear picture of the position in the Sudan as witnessed by you today. He went to Egypt in spite of unreasonable acts on the part of Major Salem which the Prime Minister considered as justifying the cessation of good relations between any two countries. In Egypt, we were keen to meet President Colonel Nasser and insisted on this. At last, a meeting, late at night, was arranged and was attended by Colonel Nasser and some members of the Revolutionary Council. We observed then that Major Salem was anxious not to let us have the chance of making any discussions. We had no alternative but to hold two subsequent meetings with M. Salem in which we exerted much effort to make him understand our point of view. Instead, he resorted to threats by saying that he will spend 10 million pounds in order to fight us with by backing the Umma Party. Our Prime Minister, calmly replied that if that money was being spent for the cause of independence, we will not consider his action directed against us. Thus ended long discussions with Major Salem from whom we were given nice receptions at the Republic Square, the Officer's Club and everywhere. When one of our colleagues attempted

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to contact Colonel Nasser, he was told that he can only talk to Major Salem. We then realised how strong was the iron curtain placed by Major Salem between his colleagues in the Council and the Sudanese, or in other words between the Sudanese and Egyptians. In an attempt to convey to Colonel Nasser the true picture in the Sudan, the Prime Minister, in his address on the occasion of the recent Kurban Bairam appealed to him to attend to the question of future relations between the two countries. In reply, Major Salem mobilised all elements of evil from Cairo Radio to spread lies and suspicion against Premier Azhari and the cause of independence. Not only that, but he tried to instigate some Sudanese classes such as cultivators, workers, students and Southern Sudanese to disobey order and to slow down production and create disturbances and confusion. Unfortunately for him, the Sudanese cannot be deceived by these despairing attempts and instead they intensified their support to and co-operation with the Government towards the liberty and full independence of the country. I wonder what you, gentlemen, may call the attitude of Cairo Radio when you realise that they have a special broadcast called "Sudanese broadcast". Is it blackmailing or a new sort of colonisation?

Gentlemen,

We appeal to the conscience of your own nations. Major Salem has now started a new attack by employing paid writers in the Middle East to publish his blunders and lies. An example is an allege by the Egyptian News Agency quoting an article by the Syrian paper "Al Ayam" publishing that according to special message from London, Prime Minister, Azhari has concluded a secret agreement with Britain for nullifying the unity of the Nile Valley. Whoever in the world does realise that the statute in force in the Sudan does not empower anyone to conclude agreements on behalf of the Sudanese. This is, indeed, utter fabrication which could

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only add to the determination of the Sudanese to secure their full independence.

Gentlemen,

We will never forget your kindness to take part with us in our rejoicings on the evacuation day. We wish your stay with us would be longer to enable you to become more acquainted with the state of affairs in our country. The Ministry of Social Affairs will give you every possible facility to visit any place you like. We sincerely hope that you will convey to your peoples the true impressions of your visit to our country. To you, our Arab neighbours, we ask you to bring to your countrymen the news of a nation which has today broken its chains in order to join hands with its neighbours and co-operate with you for the glory and prosperity of the Arab World and the humanity as a whole.

NGO/140009
NATIONAL GUIDANCE OFFICE
KHARTOUM : 16.8.1955

Abdallah

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Khartoum 26.8.1955

Cairo 24.8.1955

Political Corner.

The "Akhir Saa" Magazine published today an article by Salah Hilal under the title "The secret of the Governor-General". The article ran as follows:-

The attitude of Sir Alexander Knox Helm is rather strange - particularly the state of confidence and easiness in which he lives and thinks these days. The man who is supposed up to this moment, to be exercising his duties, has not stayed in his chair for more than one month as though his chair is full of nails or impaling stakes compelling him to desert it. What then is the secret of this attitude - Sir Knox Helm ?

As soon as you have arrived at Khartoum to take over the duties of your important post you felt tired and hastened to Erkowit Summer resort. There you sat loosely and spent a week thinking that you can do no more than spend your leave sitting on the sand under the sun. During this period you asked the Sudanese Prime Minister Sayed Ismail Azhari to come to you by plane. You stated that you have asked him to come and enjoy some rest with you - but all know that you have taken this opportunity to speak to Sayed Ismail Azhari and make him agree to support Britain's viewpoint on the question of the International Commission to supervise Self-determination elections, and at the end of that week's rest you quickly left for London and stated that you will be spending your leave. Another leave, Sir Knox and after one month's work !

You went on leave and you know that the Sudan Agreement stipulates that the Governor-General is only allowed short leave annually on very exceptional circumstances. It will be recalled that during the agreement negotiations the British representatives were the first to decide that this short leave should not exceed one week or two weeks at the utmost, and you are no doubt aware that this question of leave arose when the Egyptian side suggested that the eldest Sudanese member in the Governor-General's Commission should act for the Governor-General during the latter's absence on leave and the British side made a counter suggestion that the Chief Justice - a Britisher, should act for the Governor-General. This point has tended to

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create high tension, but later both parties agreed that the Governor-General should not be on leave except for one week only annually during the transitional period and on that occasion he exercises his duties at his leave station. You have simply ignored all this and went on leave spending days, weeks and months as though your leave has no time of expiration. You have not even thought of passing through Cairo on your way home for leave as if you are only responsible for Britain alone. However, we need not be much surprised because we have become accustomed to this sort of behaviour by your predecessors - from Sir Robert Howe, Sir Hubert Huddleston and all the rest of British Governor-Generals appointed by Egypt on the nomination of Britain and who govern the country by orders from Britain. But the strangest thing of this affair is that since your arrival at London you were supposed to be on leave, but the fact remains that you have continually been in contact with the Foreign Office, though we have no knowledge, up to this moment, but the Foreign Office has established a summer resort in which the officials can spend their leave in rest while studying the reports and perusing the files containing plans and conspiracies! You state that you are in Scotland, but you have practically spent all your days in the Foreign Office. It seems that you have transferred your office to London - Yet the real surprise comes in the fact that terrible events are happening in the Sudan which have attracted the attention of all the world and the disturbances in the South have continued for days and weeks since the conviction and imprisonment of the Southern M.P. of the Zande area. Armed engagements have continued in the South and parts of that area have been isolated and reinforcements have been carried by plane to the South and a State of emergency declared in the Southern Provinces, and you - Sir Knox Helm are still enjoying your leave!

How do you feel so confident and calm when all people enquire about you - the Governor-General of the country and their Supreme Authority ?

The days of this ordeal pass and the eyes of the world are cast on the Council of Ministers where members are working day and night, and at the very last moment the Governor-General announces that he has curtailed his leave and will be flying to Khartoum immediately. We did not understand that "immediately" meant a delay of two or three days, but you announced at 10 am of Saturday that you will be flying to Khartoum

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on Tuesday. You already know that every minute causes some sacrifices and increases the dangers of the mutiny, but why do you put yourself to all this worry and trouble? You need not come back in a hurry - you can make your decision at your ease and return to the Sudan also at your ease since you say that you are tired and in need of rest.

But is it true, Sir Knox, that you are in need of rest? or is it because there is something which you wish to evade? Do you think that by transferring your office to London you will not be in a position to see or hear things happening in Khartoum? Do you believe that you will not be responsible for the tackling of this serious situation in Khartoum?

When we were young we were told that the ostrich hides her head in the sand when she sees danger, but we did not hear that the ostrich hides her head in London - nor did we hear or read that the Governor-General belongs to the species of the ostrich!

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

Sir H. Trevelyan
No. 1187
September 1, 1955.

JE1058/14

DEPARTMENTAL
DISTRIBUTION
INDEXED

D. 1.35 p.m. September 1, 1955.
R. 3.20 p.m. September 1, 1955.

IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1187 of September 1
Repeated for information to: Governor General Khartoum
U.K.T.C. Khartoum
B.M.E.O.

My telegram No. 1171.

JE1015/43

Rumours of a reversal of Egyptian policy have been growing in recent days. Following is account given to us by the Sudan Agent.

2. According to him, Nasser last week conferred with several recent visitors to the Sudan (including Cairo journalists who visited Khartoum for the August 16 celebrations, and Gebran Hayek, the Lebanese mentioned in Beirut telegram No. 9 to Khartoum) and has accepted their advice, namely to:

- (a) Stop all propaganda against Aghari;
- (b) Withdraw support from Nureddin;
- (c) Stop bribery;
- (d) Dismiss Salah Salem;
- (e) Make a unilateral declaration in favour of Sudanese independence.

3. Declaration would not (repeat not) require any quid pro quo from the Sudanese but would simply state that so far as Egypt was concerned the Sudanese could have immediate independence.

4. As soon as independence had been effected, e.g. by recognition of the present Sudanese Parliament as the first Parliament of an independent Sudan, the Egyptians would try to secure representation in Khartoum at a specially high level, e.g. by appointment of an Egyptian Cabinet Minister to reside there, with corresponding Sudanese representation in Cairo. They would also hope to negotiate the establishment of joint committees on matters of common interest. Any such negotiations would, however, be between Sovereign States.

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Cairo telegram No. 1187 to Foreign Office

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5. See my immediately following telegram.

Foreign Office please pass to Governor General Khartoum and U.K.T.C. Khartoum (both Immediate) as my telegrams Nos. 153 and 165, respectively.

[Repeated to Governor General and U.K.T.C. Khartoum.]

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ADVANCE COPIES:

Sir I. Kirkpatrick
Private Secretary
Mr. Shuckburgh
Head of African Department.

vvvvv

SECRET

FROM KHARTOUM TO FOREIGN OFFICE
(Governor-General)

Cypher/CIP

DEPARTMENTAL
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Sir K. Helm
No. 275
September 1, 1955.

D: 6.55 a.m. September 2, 1955
R: 8.52 a.m. September 2, 1955

INDEXED

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

JE1058/149

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 275 of September 1.
Repeated for information to Cairo.

It has been in my mind that if only the Egyptians were statesman-like and would face the facts, the best step they could take toward retrieving their position here would be voluntarily to announce their recognition of the Sudan's claim for independence.

2. Now

- (a) the dismissal of Salah Salem;
- (b) the report in my telegram No. 268;
- (c) vague references in the local press to a revaluation of Egyptian policy, and
- (d) the report that Mohammed Nur El Din has gone to Cairo,

JE1907/1

Makes me wonder whether something of the kind may not be in the wind.

3. I imagine that in principle Her Majesty's Government would be agreeable, provided that no objectionable strings were attached. This would be expecting a lot, but in any case there would be no good reason for the Egyptian Government reaping all the credit, even if they should afterwards harvest it badly.

4. Psychologically the moment for the move could be when I forward the Sudan Parliament's plebiscite resolution of August 29 to the ~~ad-admini~~. It has not yet reached me, but may do so at any moment.

5. One can be fairly sure that if there should be anything in my speculation, the Egyptians will try to steal a march on Her Majesty's Government, and that one of their objects

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SECRET

Khartoum telegram No. 275 to Foreign Office

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will be to unseat Ashari. You may, therefore, wish to be ready with Her Majesty's Government's riposte.

6. Should my speculation be baseless, there would be much to be said for such a move jointly by the co-dominion. It would, of course, be greatly welcomed here and would remove the gloomy prospect of the plebiscite (which otherwise I presume the two Governments would accept), which would be disturbing in itself and which would be unsatisfactory, if only because those voting for a link would not know the kind of link for which they were voting.

7. In the absence of other developments you might, therefore, care to have the suggestions for joint declaration put in general terms to the Egyptian Government, for whom in the present circumstances it could have its attractions. If acceptable, the way would then be clear for amending the Agreement, perhaps in such a way as to provide for the election (to be supervised by the International Commission of the Seven already in train) of a Parliament, which would frame the constitution and carry through the whole process of self-determination, including the choice of the President of the Republic. The value of such a British initiative would be great if anything came of it.

8. It has been pointed out to me that if the above proposal were adopted as it stands, with the election of a Parliament to be entrusted with the future administration of the country, as well as with the constitution, it would mean the immediate return to party politics just at a moment when the politicians are showing signs of pulling together on the future status of the country. The point has real force. Better solution would be for the present Parliament being the constitution makers. But I do not myself see the Egyptians agreeing to this. It might, therefore, be best to keep to the procedure of the Constituent Assembly. Further consideration could, however, be given to this point if the Egyptians were disposed to play on the main issue.

Foreign Office pass Cairo as my telegram No. 163.

[Repeated to Cairo].

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Mr. Shuckburgh
Head of African Department

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JE1058/149(A)

letter
or pw.

SECRETARY OF STATE INDEXED

The attached telegrams from Cairo and Khartoum have been discussed with Sir I. Kirkpatrick and Mr. Turton this evening, and the draft telegram to Cairo, which I submit, has been aged by them.

2. Briefly the point is that Nasser is thought to be moving in the direction of a unilateral declaration in favour of immediate Sudanese independence. He may be tempted to try and make this into a point ~~scored~~^{scored} against us, with the object of strengthening pro-Egypt opinion in Khartoum. Since we are ourselves advocates of independence in the Sudan, there is no reason why we should allow this to happen and we think Sir H. Trevelyan should take the opportunity of his appointment with Nasser to-morrow to shew the latter that there is nothing to be gained by acting unilaterally.

3. The effect of your approving this draft telegram will be that, if it is a fact that Nasser's mind is working in this direction, we may find ourselves supporting a more rapid move ~~for~~^{towards} an independent Sudan than provided for in the Anglo-Egyptian agreement of 1953. The process of deciding between independence and a link with Egypt would be eliminated. We would avoid a plebiscite and we might avoid special elections for a constituent assembly. (It is conceivable that the present parliament could be declared capable of drawing up a constitution.) These various possibilities will require further careful consideration, and we have not thought it right to make any observations on them at such short notice.

4. A copy of the draft telegram is with the Resident Clerk and if you approve it perhaps you could telephone to him so that it can be despatched to-night.

Done
H.M.
2/9

C. S. ...
September 2, 1955.

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO

Cypher/OTP and
By Bag

DEPARTMENTAL
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No. 1881
September 2, 1955.

D. 10.49 p.m. September 2, 1955.

EMERGENCY
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Addressed to Cairo telegram No. 1881 of September 2.
Repeated for information to Governor-General Khartoum
U.K.T.C. Khartoum
and Saving to B.M.E.O. No. 738.

Your telegrams Nos. 1187 and 1188 and Khartoum telegram No. 275.

If it is a fact that Egyptian policy is evolving in this direction we can only welcome it. If Nasser in conversation with you hints at his willingness to offer independence to the Sudan, you should at once say that Her Majesty's Government would have the fullest sympathy with this idea and would be willing to discuss ways and means of carrying it out as a joint policy by the sa-dawini. If you think it would help, you may say that it has always been Her Majesty's Government's hope that the Sudan, if she chose independence, would establish close and friendly relations with Egypt and that for this reason you feel sure Her Majesty's Government would not wish to oppose the sort of arrangements described in paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 1187, provided the Sudan Government freely agree to them.

2. But we must try to avoid letting the Egyptians steal a march on us. Not only might this have disturbing effects politically in Khartoum but it would render more difficult the joint action by the sa-dawini which is essential if the independent status of the Sudan is to be brought about by legal and constitutional means. If, therefore, Nasser does not mention the matter to you, you should endeavour to draw him. Your object should be to persuade him that there is no advantage to be gained by acting unilaterally, since we are quite ready to go as far as he is, within the limits of what the Sudanese themselves want. You might suggest that upon receipt of the Sudan Parliament's Plebiscite Resolution of August 29 (see paragraph 4 of Khartoum telegram No. 275) we should concert our

/reply and

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Foreign Office telegram No. 1881 to Cairo

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reply and try to include in it an agreed account of the next steps to be taken; and that in the meantime neither of us should make any public statement of our intentions.

[Copies sent to No. 10 Downing Street].

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Information Policy Department

SSSSS

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTF

DEPARTMENTAL DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Trevelyan
No. 1211
September 3, 1955

D: 1.19 a.m. September 4, 1955
R: 3.42 a.m. September 4, 1955

CONFIDENTIAL

JE1058/154 INDEXED

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1211 of September 3.

Repeated for information to Governor General Khartoum
U.K.T.C. Khartoum
B.M.E.O. *JE1058*

Your telegram No. 1881: Sudan.

I told the Prime Minister this morning that I should like to discuss the Sudan question with him generally. I repeated our basic principles, that we had an agreement which we were prepared to carry out, subject to any amendment jointly agreed as a result of an expression of Sudanese opinion, that the Sudanese should themselves choose their future, and that whatever they chose, we were fully agreed that there must be a close and friendly relationship between Egypt and the Sudan, owing to their vital common interests. I emphasised the necessity for cooperation between the two Governments, and that, when proposals were received from the Sudanese, we should work out a joint policy in confidential negotiation and send a joint reply. The Prime Minister agreed generally. He said that we should clearly not try and "put each other in a corner", and that I could be assured that no part of my conversation with him on the Sudan would find its way into the Press.

2. I asked the Prime Minister if he could tell me what their present ideas were. He replied that he would need time to consider the whole question, and it would help him to know what our ideas were. I considered it best to recapitulate the situation up to date. I said that we were now faced with a formal proposal from the Sudanese Parliament for the appointment of the Supervisory Commission and should soon be receiving a formal proposal for a plebiscite. If we accepted this proposal we should have to re-negotiate a part of our agreement and discuss the method of carrying it out. In conversations between myself and the late Minister for Sudan Affairs, it had been agreed that / the two

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CONFIDENTIAL

Cairo telegram No. 1211 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

the two Governments would accept in principle a proposal for a plebiscite made by the Sudan Parliament. The Prime Minister professed himself unaware of this. I had also discussed with Major Salem the possibility that the Sudanese Parliament might make a declaration of the future of the Sudan, and he had replied that the Egyptian Government would not accept such a declaration, as some members of the N.U.P. had changed their minds since they were elected. I then described Major Salem's proposal that the decision should be taken by special political conference, and gave him my reasons why, in my opinion, a Sudanese proposal or declaration should be made by the Sudanese Parliament. I hoped that the Prime Minister would ask me to come and see him as soon as he had clarified his ideas on these problems.

3. The Prime Minister replied that he was going to spend most of next week in Alexandria with his family on holiday and would not be able to take this matter up with me until he returned. He did not like making up his mind in a hurry. He asked whether there was any urgency. I said that the only matter of immediate urgency seemed to be the appointment of the international commission, the members of which should reach the Sudan as soon as possible in order to familiarise themselves with the local conditions before their active work began. We could not invite them unless we told them their terms of reference, and these could not finally be agreed until we had made up our minds on the plebiscite question. I hoped, therefore, that he and I would be able to discuss the matter again at an early date.

4. I mentioned briefly recent developments in the South, and recapitulated our view that the problem was the restoration of the authority of the Sudanese Government, which must be supported by the co-dominium, and that the initiative must be with the Sudanese Government and the Governor-General. The Prime Minister agreed, and said that he hoped that they would be able to solve this question.

5. The Prime Minister remarked what a pity it was that I had not known Major Salem in his normal state. The Sudanese had made him very nervous indeed in the last few weeks.

6. Please see my immediately following telegram.

/ Foreign Office

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTF

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Sir H. Trevelyan

JE 1058/157

INDEXED

No. 1213

D. 12.21 a.m. September 4, 1955

September 3, 1955

R. 4.21 a.m. September 4, 1955

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1213 of September 3.
Repeated for information to Governor General Khartoum

U.K.T.C. Khartoum

B.M.E.O.

My telegram No. 1165: Sudan.

J

JE 1058/142

I mentioned to Nasser that the Governor General had been upset at the personal attack on him which had been broadcast to the Sudan after his visit to Cairo. The Prime Minister said that the Foreign Minister had told him what I had said about this, and that the Governor General would no doubt understand that circumstances had now changed.

2. Since this meant that he had dismissed the Minister responsible for the attack, the Governor General may well feel that the matter should be left there.

Foreign Office please pass Governor General Khartoum and U.K.T.C. Khartoum as my telegrams Nos. 160 and 172.

[Repeated to Governor General Khartoum and U.K.T.C. Khartoum].

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SUDAN

JE1016/65

The situation in the Sudan ^{itself} has not changed very much since the Secretary of State spoke to the Cabinet on August 26. Since then, however, Major Salah Salem has left the Egyptian Government and the post of Minister for Sudan Affairs has, for the moment, been assumed by Colonel Nasser. This may lead to a considerable change in Egypt's attitude to the Sudan and in some ways certain changes have already taken place. It is strongly rumoured that Colonel Nasser may now be thinking in terms of making a unilateral declaration of independence for the Sudan but Sir Humphrey Trevelyan saw him last Saturday and it seems that his mind is not yet made up.

2. The Sudanese Parliament have now asked the co-dominion to agree that the future status of the Sudan should be decided, not as laid down in the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1953 by the Constituent Assembly, but by a plebiscite. ~~It is not clear~~ We are prepared to agree to a plebiscite and are hoping that the Egyptians will agree to send a joint reply to this effect.

3. The Sudanese Government is now regaining control of the situation in the South after the mutiny which broke out on August 18. Although very few of the mutineers have yet surrendered to Northern Sudan Defence Force troops, they are no longer an organised body and are not thought to be a serious menace from the military point of view. Some of them are still being detained by the Uganda authorities but the majority have dispersed. So far the Northern troops have acted, while in the South, in an exemplary fashion and this, if it is maintained, will help the Sudanese Government in its task of regaining the confidence of the Southern population and restoring some sort of administration.

4. Our policy has been to do all we can to help to bolster the authority of the present Government in Khartoum and the

/Governor-

Governor-General has agreed that no British or Egyptian troops will be sent to the South without prior consultation with the two governments. There is at present no case for British intervention in the South and even if the situation deteriorated considerably, we could only intervene at the likely risk of destroying the present Government and of allowing the Egyptians to move in with us.

As regards the Prime Minister's inquiry as to what we should do if the Southeners asked us to take them over, the answer is that this would be a complete reversal of the policy to which we committed ourselves when we signed the 1953 agreement with Egypt. There are no economic or strategic grounds for entertaining the idea of holding the South, + it would be a heavy commitment.

C. B. Shackleton
17/9

September 5, 1955.

CONFIDENTIAL

JE 1058/160

JE 1058/147, 148, 150

SUDAN INDEPENDENCE

INDEXED

Flags
JE 1058/149

JE 107
JE 101

A B C
Cairo telegrams No. 1187, 1188 and 1196 and the Governor-General's telegram No. 275 have crossed our own telegrams Nos. 1855 and 1857 to Cairo, which deal with the arrangements for a plebiscite in the Sudan and the setting up of the International Commission. If Colonel Nasser does not propose any further short-circuiting of the Self-Determination procedure, Sir H. Trevelyan, when he sees him tomorrow, will proceed on the lines laid down in our telegrams.

Argument.

2. If Colonel Nasser is really thinking of immediate independence, probably the only feasible way of carrying this out would be for ourselves and the Egyptians to hand over the Sudan to the present Government (not as ~~suggested~~ ^{implied} in the Cairo and Khartoum telegrams to the Sudanese Parliament). We should have to know that the Government were willing to accept. Azhari would probably be glad to do so though it is just possible that he might hesitate to take so much on his shoulders until the situation in the South looks more healthy. We, ourselves, might be criticised for transferring the Sudan to a relatively inexperienced administration without first giving it a Constitution. The South would almost certainly feel they had been let down.

3. On the other hand, it is quite clear that the majority of Sudanese want independence and there is strong pressure in the Sudan to by-pass the cumbersome procedure laid down in the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement. Despite the snags mentioned above, if Azhari were willing to take over, the method would have many attractions for us and, if Colonel Nasser is willing to go so far, it may well be to our advantage to go along with him.

/4. The

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4. The Governor-General says that he favours an immediate declaration of independence and would like the drawing up of a Constitution to be entrusted to the present Parliament, though he appears to think that the Egyptians would not accept this and would insist on a Constituent Assembly. However, Cairo telegram No. 1187 seems to imply that the Egyptians would accept. This would, in practice, be the most convenient way of proceeding if the present Government is to be the first Government of an independent Sudan.
5. It has not been possible to go into all the legal aspects and I do not think it is necessary to do so until we know more clearly what Colonel Nasser has in mind. Sir H. Trevelyan will see him tomorrow and has asked for instructions before he does so.

Recommendation

6. I recommend that if Colonel Nasser is willing to go as far as to agree to hand over to the present Sudanese Government, we should go along with him.
7. I attach a draft telegram which has been agreed with Mr. Vallat. see JE 1052/149

W.B. Shepherd
September 2, 1955

I agree. But I have redrafted the telegram. I think we must be cautious about "immediate" independence, as opposed to an immediate acceptance of independence.

C.B. Shepherd
2/9



later soon

1037/74/55

SECRET

JE 1058/162

INDEXED

BRITISH EMBASSY,

CAIRO.

September 12, 1955.

Dear Tom,

JE1058/147

We have been told by the Sudan Agent that advice, broadly similar to that reported in our telegram No. 1187 of September 1, has now been given to Nasser by a Sudanese pro-Unionist. Deeb's account is as follows.

JE1058/148

2. Nureddin's visit to Cairo (paragraph 1 (b) of our telegram No. 1188) took place not at Egyptian request but on his own initiative. He tried to see Nasser but was pushed off on to Zakaria Mohieddin who is dealing with high level Sudan matters insofar as Nasser cannot deal with them himself. Nureddin's view was that there was nothing wrong with Salah Salem's Sudan policy; it simply had not been prosecuted vigorously enough. The attacks on Azhari should be re-doubled. On the other hand Suliman Musa, of whom we have no record, but whom Deeb describes as an influential labour leader and an ardent Unionist, visited Cairo about the same time and on September 4 submitted to the Egyptian Government a memorandum setting forth his views (Deeb had obtained a copy of this memorandum). Briefly, the views expressed were:-

- (i) All Sudanese now supported independence.
- (ii) If a plebiscite were held the result would be a serious loss of Egyptian prestige.
- (iii) The logical conclusion was to accept the idea of Sudanese independence now and work for union between the two countries at some later date. In order to achieve this:-
 - (a) All propaganda and bribery of individuals should cease.
 - (b) The Egyptians should make their peace with Azhari.
 - (c) Egypt should make a declaration granting the Sudan independence.
 - (d) The personalities associated with the failure of recent Egyptian policy towards the Sudan should disappear [presumably Nureddin and Salah Salem] and future policy should be directed through persons not associated with the present failure.

/ (e)

T.E. Bromley, Esq., C.M.G.,
African Department,
Foreign Office.

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- (e) In order not to hearten the opponents of Salah Salem he should be associated with the declaration of independence. Suliman Musa praised Salah Salem lavishly but made it clear that after being associated with the declaration he should fade out.

3. Nasser has been away in Burg el-Arab (he is due back today) and we have as yet no clue as to the course he will adopt. He may suggest cutting short the processes of self-determination, e.g. by accepting a decision in favour of independence by the present Sudanese Parliament. He may perhaps want to get something in exchange. One possible quid pro quo might be an agreement on the division of Nile waters. There is no doubt that the Egyptians feel very strongly that the Sudanese are playing politics on this question. Whether the Sudanese would be prepared to modify their present demands in order to reach agreement on the waters is not a question that we here can usefully attempt to answer.

4. I am sending copies of this letter to Luce and Roberts at Khartoum.

*James Earl
Rennie*

(T.W. GARVEY)