

Aspects of Sudanese Foreign Policy: 'Splendid Isolation', Radicalization and 'Finlandization'

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The foreign policies of successive Sudanese governments since the period of self-determination had been characterized by a curious pattern in which policies changed course, or were aborted or reversed in a way that indicated the lack of any consistent or long-term foreign policy strategy. The first national government of Isma'il al-Azhari, elected in November 1953 on a platform calling for union with Egypt under the slogan of 'Unity of the Nile Valley' had by December 1955 opted for Sudan's complete independence. The military regime of General Ibrahim 'Abbud - despite, or perhaps because of, its rather consistent record of passive withdrawal and non-involvement in foreign affairs - had managed by 1964 to dissipate the goodwill it had initially generated with Egypt, and to alienate Sudan's African neighbours by its harsh and brutal policy in southern Sudan. The radical foreign policy initiated by the first provisional government in October 1964, had ended by July 1965 in a new retreat to conservatism. The Numayri regime undoubtedly beat all records for policy reversal by making a complete U-turn from a pro-Soviet stance in 1969 to a pro-Western posture by 1976 - a reversal of policy which, not coincidentally, ran parallel to that of Egypt.

The reason behind this phenomenon might be that Sudanese politics had always been buffeted by conflicting interests, both internal and external, which led to a certain ambiguity in Sudan's relations with the outside world. The foreign policies of Sudanese governments since independence had largely been shaped not by the national interest of the country as such, but by the interests of the regime in power. These interests, in turn, were not constant and tended to fluctuate with changing internal circumstances and/or external developments.

This chapter examines three aspects of Sudanese foreign policy: the isolationism of the 'Abbud regime, the radicalism of the first October government, and the 'Finlandization' of Sudan's foreign policy vis-à-vis Egypt under the Numayri regime.⁽¹⁾

The policy of isolation and non-involvement adopted by the 'Abbud junta was conducive neither to the resolution of Sudan's internal problems, nor to the improvement of its image abroad, (the 'sick man of Africa' was how Sekou Touré described the Sudan under 'Abbud). The radicalization of Sudan's foreign policy in the wake of the October Revolution was perhaps the only period during which a concerted effort was made to put in practice the declared ideals and objectives of foreign policy. But this policy, inevitably, ended in antagonizing some of Sudan's neighbours at a time of acute internal divisions and domestic strife; over-involvement in foreign affairs proved to be as self-defeating as non-involvement. The close association with Egypt of President Numayri's regime had led to a 'finlandized' pattern of relations in which Sudan would

not, or could not, take a foreign policy stand that was actually hostile to Egypt, thus seriously limiting Sudan's foreign policy options. In each of the three cases the underlying motivation of foreign policy orientation was primarily to serve the interests of the regime in power at the time.

THE PERIOD OF 'SPLENDID ISOLATION', 1958-1964:

The main feature of the foreign policy of 'Abbud's military regime was the lack of any active or long-term involvement in external affairs.⁽²⁾ The regime maintained the impeccable Third World orthodoxy of previous Sudanese governments - standing for world peace, African unity, Arab unity, nonalignment, all nations struggling to be free, and so on. But in practice the foreign policy of the junta was characterized by a 'lethargic indifference' to world affairs. Sudan remained aloof from the radical North African Arab wing of the Casablanca Charter as well as from the more conservative Monrovia Conference countries.

The main function of the regime's foreign policy was to solicit aid from any quarter that was willing to give it. This made it imperative to adopt a low profile in international affairs. Indeed, the activities of the Foreign Affairs Ministry during that period were more appropriate to those of a Ministry of Foreign Trade. The first foreign policy statement, announced by Foreign Minister Ahmad Khair in November 1958, sounded in parts, like a commercial advertisement. "We will endeavour to further political, economic and cultural cooperation with all," the statement said, "we are in need of foreign loans and aid; we shall therefore do our best to create a favourable atmosphere to attract them.... In our commercial relations we shall deal with all countries of the world on the basis of mutual interest". (First 1970, p.249)

On 29 November 1958 the military reconfirmed the US aid agreement, which had precipitated a major political crisis in the Sudanese parliament just before the coup, and which might have been a factor in the decision to hand over power to the army. The World Bank, West Germany, Britain and Italy became prominent donors of aid and technical assistance.

In keeping with its middle-of-the-road policy, the regime sought to balance its economic connection with the West through soliciting recognition and aid from the Eastern bloc. In one of its first foreign policy acts, the government recognized the People's Republic of China. Trade agreements were negotiated with the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia and, from 1961 on, the Sudan found itself the recipient of aid from many sources.

Non-alignment was endorsed, not from any ideological conviction but because, as Ahmad Khair later put it, "it was just something to be used to win friends" (Interview, 9 July 1981). The adoption of non-alignment was essentially a convenient certificate of Sudan's non-commitment in cold-war rivalries. 'Abbud's visit to the USA in 1961 encouraged good bilateral relations; so did his visit to the USSR in the same year, and Chou En-lai's visit to the Sudan in January 1964. But in terms of foreign policy orientation these visits meant little, except perhaps to underline Sudan's posture of non-involvement.⁽³⁾

This attitude was projected into other areas of foreign relations. Thus, although the Sudan continued to pay lip-service to its allegiances with the Arab world, in practice "the emphasis was more on the Sudan as part of Africa, so that it could afford to stand at a distance from the forces competing for leadership in the Arab world." (First 1970, p.250)

Relations with Egypt started with a cordial note. Egypt was the first country to extend diplomatic recognition to the new regime. In his first broadcast to the nation on 17 November, 'Abbud promised to resolve all outstanding problems with Egypt and to remove 'the artificial cloud' hanging over the relations between the two countries. The conclusion of the new Nile waters agreement with Egypt in November 1959 was one of the few major foreign policy acts undertaken by the military regime. The two sides agreed on an allocation of water, which theoretically increased Sudan's quota, and on the financial compensation for the relocation of Nubians whose land in Wadi Haifa would be flooded on the completion of Egypt's high dam.⁽⁴⁾ The successful conclusion of the agreement could be seen as a positive achievement, considering Cairo's previous refusals to grant any concessions. The agreement removed a bone of contention with Egypt and thus seemed to pave the way for better relations between the two countries. The improvement in relations was symbolized by 'Abbud's visit to Cairo in July 1960, which was reciprocated by President Nasser in November of the same year.

However, the conclusion of the agreement entailed damaging domestic repercussions that outweighed any short term advantages which the regime might have gained. In the first place, it sent a wave of criticism throughout the country. The resettlement compensation of Ls15 million (about half the sum demanded by previous governments) was regarded as unsatisfactory; in fact, the resettlement was eventually to cost double the compensation allotted. Secondly, and more seriously, the conclusion of the agreement precipitated the first open civilian challenge to the authority of the military when, in 1960, violent demonstrations erupted in Wadi Haifa in protest against the government's decision to resettle the 50,000 dispossessed Nubians in Kashm al-Girba. Although the near insurrection was finally contained the damage to the regime's authority could not be undone. As one writer noted, "in the face of opposition, the military attitude hardened; the resettlement project was one on which the prestige and authority of the regime would rest. The price of prestige helped to cripple the central treasury. As for the authority of the regime, the myth of its invulnerability had been challenged by the act of Wadi Haifa defiance and would never be the same again". (First 1970, p.249).

In the economic field the regime was also encountering difficulties. The military had acted effectively when they took power to rectify the deteriorating economic situation. In January 1959, the government abolished the reserve price on Sudanese cotton and offered it for sale at whatever price it could fetch. Since world prices were rising at the time, both the backlog and new crops were sold by August 1959, and the country became economically solvent with a small surplus of revenue. But the improvement in the economic situation and the flow of foreign aid only encouraged the government to embark on economic projects that entailed a heavy expenditure of foreign currency and by 1963 the country was deep in debt. According to one source, "over-estimated revenue and underestimated expenditure had resulted in a deficit of more than £75 millions in five years". (First 1970, p.251) Thus, any popularity that the regime might have earned as a result of its initial economic successes was gradually eroded by its failure to handle the political and economic issues confronting it. The junta became increasingly insensitive to popular dissatisfaction with its heavy-handed policies, especially in the south, and with the creeping corruption in its administration. "The three main reasons for the popular groundswell against military rule were the failure of the soldiers to create an efficient government, their failure to solve the problem of southern Sudan, and their failure to give the Sudanese people any sense of purpose". (Beshir 1964)

The regime's domestic troubles were reflected in its foreign relations. Sudan's relations with Egypt began to cool considerably after President Nasser intensified, in 1961, the process of socialist transformation in Egypt and assumed a more militant stance against conservative and pro-Western states in the Arab world. Relations were further strained when the 'Abbud regime demanded the payment of Egypt's outstanding debt to the Sudan - a demand which the Egyptians, not unreasonably, attributed to imperialist influences over the Sudan that aimed to undermine the revolutionary policies of Egypt. By 1964, relations with Egypt more or less reverted to their pre-Abbud state of mutual suspicion.

Nor was the deterioration in relations confined to Sudan's northern neighbours. In southern Sudan, the mutiny of 1955 had by 1961, taken the form of organized rebellion headed by the *Anya-Nya*. The attempt of the military to crush the rebellion by force exacerbated hostile feelings in the south, led to an influx of southern refugees into the neighbouring countries (Uganda, Central African Republic, the Congo, and Ethiopia), and also produced sympathies there for the *Anya-Nya* cause. The exiled southern leaders were waging an effective campaign abroad, portraying the southern problem as a religious and racial crusade by Muslim Arabs against Christian southerners. In February 1964, the military regime expelled some 300 missionaries from the south on the ground that they were giving support to the rebels. This might well have been the case but the unimaginative and heavy-handed manner in which the military handled this, and other issues concerning the south, was far from reassuring to the outside world in general and to Sudan's neighbours in particular. In July 1964, a speaker in the Uganda Parliament declared: "How can we stand on the floor of this House and talk about South Africa and Portugal, when people are being slaughtered like cattle next door to us". (Henderson 1966, p.204)

That relations with Sudan's neighbours to the south and east did not deteriorate further was largely due to the realistic and self-serving practice of the military to refrain from supporting secessionist elements from these African neighbours. As one writer observed, "In this sense, a thinly-veiled system of deterrence-by-mutual-hostage kept the peace, such as it was, but this was no foundation on which to build good neighbourly relations". (Bechtold, 1976, p.315)

By 1964, the military regime was failing both as a government in the north, and as an army in the south, and the latter failure, because of the brutality and harshness that accompanied it, sparked the wave of revulsion and anger in the north that culminated in the October Revolution of 1964. The October tide that submerged the military ended a foreign policy isolation which was perhaps far from being 'splendid'.

THE BRIEF PHASE OF RAOICALISM, 1964-1965:

Compared to previous policy pronouncements, there was hardly anything new in the 'guiding principles' of foreign policy outlined on 30 October 1964 by Sir al-Khatim al-Khalifa, the Prime Minister of the new Provisional Government. What was definitely new was the revolution itself and the forces which generated and, for a while, directed it. The overthrow of military rule by civilians was, indeed, phenomenal at a time when soldiers had seized and kept power in many countries. As one report noted at the time, "the revolution was an event unique in the history of Africa, if not of the world. It was achieved not by armed force from a rival clique of officers, not by an armed mob, not by politicians with outside support, but by a group of intellectuals -

students, lawyers, who quickly mobilized public opinion and persuaded President 'Abbud that he and his Cabinet must resign.' (*East African Standard*, Nairobi, 20 January 1965)

Indeed, the atmosphere in Khartoum in the wake of the revolution was more akin to that of a newly-independent country than one that had ruled itself for nine years. There seemed to be for the first time, little uncertainty about fundamentals; the profound sense of achievement bred a feeling that there was a mission to be fulfilled, and that the revolution made possible, if not inevitable, the emergence of the Sudan as a dynamic force in the heart of Africa. Tied up with this feeling, or emanating from it, was a determination that there would no longer be that discrepancy between declared ideals and actual practice which had characterized previous foreign policy.

The overthrow of the 'Abbud regime did in fact signal a decisive break with the attitude of non-commitment and passive withdrawal adopted by Sudanese governments in the past. The involvement of the new regime with the revolutionary movements in neighbouring countries and its commitment to radical causes throughout the Afro-Asian world was a natural reaction to the conservatism of the military junta. But it was also explained and justified in terms of self-interest: a revolutionary foreign policy was seen as essential to maintain the momentum of the revolution at home.

The political nature of the provisional government clearly indicated that it would hardly be content with simply marking time. Although it assumed power with wide popular support, the new government was not representative in the normal sense of the word. Most of the ministers were actually nominated by the National Front of Professional Organizations - a political body that had come into existence with the first rumblings of revolution. The Front, which was the *eminence grise* behind the government for five crucial months was clearly influenced by the highly organized Sudanese Communist Party and its left-wing associates.

It would be wrong, however, to view subsequent foreign policy as part of a communist strategy or conspiracy. "The communists had thrived as usual under proscription. As a result they had been at the forefront of resistance, and after the revolution they were by far the best organized party. Predictably enough, the Communist Party sought to influence events, in domestic as well as foreign affairs. But with power now in the hands of urban and intellectual groups, the Sudan was bound to move left anyway, and in the new political climate, a fresh approach to foreign policy was inevitable". (Howell and Hamid 1969, p.300)

The new line in foreign policy was quickly demonstrated when the cabinet decided, in November 1964, to deny landing facilities to British aircraft carrying military equipment or personnel to Aden. The government publicly condemned the landing of Belgian paratroops in Stanleyville and the complicity of the USA in it, and called upon the OAU to implement collective action against 'imperialist aggression' in the Congo. Of more consequence was the government's decision to offer immediate and active support to the Congolese rebels (the *Simba*) and the Eritrean liberation movement. By January 1965, Algerian and Egyptian arms were being flown, via Khartoum, to the *Simba* rebels on Sudan's southern borders.

It was unfortunate for the Sudanese government that the arms shipments reached the Congolese rebels at the time they were retreating in disarray and defeat before Tshombe's white mercenaries across the Sudan's borders. Their newly acquired weapons were now of little use to them except

perhaps as barter for food and drink. Consequently, the new weapons easily found their way into the hands of the *Anya-Nya* rebels. Thus, the sudden influx of arms tended to strengthen the military position of the *Anya-Nya* who had been badly harassed during the last months of the 'Abbud regime.

More seriously still, with the defeat of the *Simba* rebels, Tshombe's government began to give material support to the Southern rebels. In the past, the *Anya-Nya* had found a relatively secure arms route through Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia as well as the Congo, but none of these countries had given active support to them. Tshombe's motives in changing this situation could be seen as being partly a retaliatory measure against Sudan's support of the *Simba*, and partly a tactical move to secure *Anya-Nya* help in pursuing the remnants of the *Simba* forces who had fled into southern Sudan.

Tshombe's involvement in the southern rebellion injected a new and, from Khartoum's point of view, an ominous element into an already intractable problem; it tended to give substance to Sudanese claims of US and Israeli support of the *Anya-Nya*. In a note of protest, presented to the OAU in March 1965, over incursions by Tshombe's air force into Sudanese territory, the Sudan drew attention to "yet fresh uncontested proof of what is obviously an international conspiracy of wide ramifications in order that chaos and subversion may contaminate all African countries neighbouring the Congo". (Khartoum News Service 7 March 1965) But as Tshombe's forces continued to violate Sudanese territory, thus exacerbating the southern problem, the conviction grew in Khartoum, especially among leftist circles, that the progressive African radicalism of the October Revolution was being attacked by reactionary western imperialism.⁽⁵⁾

While Khartoum's attention was anxiously focused southwards, a serious situation had been developing on Sudan's eastern borders. As early as January 1965, there had been disturbances on the border provoked by *Anya-Nya* forces operating from bases inside Ethiopian territory. (*al-Ayam*, Khartoum, 12 January 1965) The new tension on the border reflected the concern of Addis Ababa over the popular and official support given in Sudan to the Eritrean liberation movement.⁽⁶⁾ In December 1964, the Ethiopian ambassador to Khartoum voiced his government's concern in a press conference; he described the leaders of the Eritrean Front as representing no one but themselves and called on the Sudanese government not to support them (Khartoum New Service, 18 December 1964). From an Ethiopian perspective, the turn of events in Sudan was indeed alarming. The Haile Selassie regime was facing acute foreign policy problems of its own. In the east its relations with Somalia were strained and the future of the vitally important French Somaliland was still unresolved. The increase of Egyptian influences in the Red Sea and southern Arabia constituted another challenge to the pro-Western Ethiopian government. Obviously, it could not view with equanimity a new source of danger in the west from a militant Sudanese regime. Thus, it was not simply the question of harbouring Eritrean rebels that was worrying Addis Ababa, but also the wide implications of the radical Sudanese foreign policy. The Ethiopians knew that the Sudanese intelligentsia in all its political shades regarded the Haile Selassie regime as something of an anachronism, and they always feared what they thought to be 'an Islamic encirclement' with Somalia and the Sudan as the claws of the pincer. This fear, which apparently stemmed from their sour relations with Somalia, might have tempted them to retaliate, against Somalia by signing a defence treaty with Kenya, and against Sudan by giving sanctuary and support to the *Anya-Nya*.

In dealing with the Sudan, the Ethiopians were prepared to go further than encouraging the southern revolt. In April 1965, there were reports that Ethiopian farmers had penetrated some 45 miles into the Sudan and started farming the land under the protection of a police force (*al-Zaman*, Khartoum, 1 May 1965). In an even more flagrant violation of Sudanese sovereignty, Ethiopian agents carried a series of bombing attacks of the residences of exiled Eritrean leaders and, in the acts of terrorism they organized in Kassala, some Sudanese were killed.

As though harassment from the Congo and Ethiopia was not enough, the Sudan had also to cope with a new source of trouble when, in June 1965, Chad President Tombalbye threatened to repatriate Sudanese citizens living in Chad and to confiscate their property, in retaliation of what he alleged was the harbouring of Chadian exiles in the Sudan. "If the Sudan does not return these adventurers in Khartoum," Tombalbye declared in a public speech, "the Sudan can no longer count on Chad to practise good neighbourliness towards it" (*Africa Diary*, 17 July 1965). There were broad hints that Chad might open its borders to southern Sudanese rebels.

Just as it had sapped the authority of the military junta, the southern problem was proving to be the Achilles heel of the October Revolution. There was a certain element of irony in this outcome; it was, after all the northern protest against the policy of the military in the south that brought down the army rule and a peaceful settlement of the problem had been one of the first priorities the new government.

The first provisional government started well in tackling the southern problem. In a statement, in November 1964 that was of value as a gesture of reconciliation, the government acknowledged that force was no solution to the problem and declared a general amnesty and cease-fire which was accompanied by an appeal to southern leaders, inside and outside the country, to participate in formulating a peaceful solution. The new southern policy was immediately welcomed in East Africa. In January 1965 Uganda and the Sudan ratified an agreement to form a joint committee to supervise the return of southern refugees. In Kenya, the press appealed to southern leaders to cooperate with the new government, and to "let the past bury the dead past ... for surely the main thing is to be Sudanese" (*East African Standard*, 20 January 1965)

The change of attitude in East Africa clearly indicated that none of Sudan's African neighbours - all of whom also had problems of integrating minorities - favoured the idea of southern Sudan's secession. *The East African Standard* noted in March that the southern demand for secession "could have serious consequences for Sudan and Africa ... It could draw a clear dividing line between Muslim and non-Muslim Africa, and set up a new unviable state hostile to its former parent and a prey to cold war manoeuvres"

But the high hopes of a southern settlement were quickly disappointed. The Round Table conference, held in Khartoum in March 1965 to find a workable formula for resolving the southern problem, failed to reach agreement. Despite substantial concessions by northern political parties, there was still little common ground between the two sides. "The Northerners, while offering some regional devolution of power, stopped short of federation, the Southerners, while accepting a unified Sudan, wanted the loosest of confederation". (Howell and Hamid 1969, p.305)

Nor was the situation in the south propitious to a peaceful settlement. The *Anya-Nya* was gaining strength in the south and increasing support from those neighbouring countries alienated by

Sudan's radical policies. Under the circumstances, the *Anya-Nya* leadership tended to regard any gesture of reconciliation from the north as evidence of weakness.

The failure to resolve the southern problem undermined the radical foreign policy of the October government. Sudan could not become actively involved in African liberation - and sometimes secessionist - movements without inviting the counter-intervention of other affected parties in the southern rebellion. The situation was churned up too by the backwash of the political crisis precipitated by the demand of the traditional political parties (mainly the Umma and the NUP) for a more influential share in the government. The parties charged that the radical elements who controlled the government were "fellow-travelers or hidden members of the Sudanese Communist Party" (*al-Nil*, Khartoum, 9 February 1965). The left-wing groups attacked the traditional parties as "counter-revolutionaries bent on liquidating the October revolution and what it stands for" (*al-Midan*, Khartoum, 13 February 1965). The political crisis resulted, in late February 1965, in a new cabinet that gave greater representation to the traditional parties.

The reaction which set in might have been symptomatic of the general disillusionment that was beginning to manifest itself. Although foreign policy was not a direct issue in the political crisis, (indeed, the second provisional government rivaled the first in its overt pursuit of a 'revolutionary' foreign policy).⁽⁷⁾ It was evident that the scene had been set for the Sudan's retreat from its initial revolutionary drives.

In June 1965, general elections in the north brought to power an Umma-NUP coalition government under the premiership of Muhammad Ahmad Mahjub. The new government was by nature conservative and a retreat from radicalism required little heart-searching. In his policy statement to the Constituent Assembly on 28 June, Mahjub dutifully reaffirmed his government's commitment to the foreign policy formulated by the revolution. The Prime Minister then left immediately for Addis Ababa to conclude an agreement with Ethiopia banning hostile activities against one another's country.

The October revolution had already entered the stage of Thermidor.

THE PATTERN OF 'FINLANDIZATION'*

The coming to power of the Numayri regime in May 1969, constituted a new point of radical departure in Sudanese politics. Domestically, the ideological orientation and the political procedures and institutions of the regime (the Revolutionary Command Council, the National Charter, the mass organization, the use of referenda, the all-powerful presidency) were closely cast after, if not out-rightly copied from, the Egyptian model.

From the beginning the foreign policy of the Numayri regime was marked by a close identification with Egypt which was to remain the touchstone of Sudan's external relations. Indeed, Sudanese-Egyptian relations assumed a pattern which, in the view of this writer, strikingly resembled the relationship of Finland with the Soviet Union.⁽⁸⁾

Such a trend constituted a drastic break with previous foreign policy traditions, which had maintained a fairly independent foreign policy orientation, whether passive or not, and an invariably strict neutrality in the important field of inter-Arab affairs. In the pre-1969 period, Sudan had kept on reasonable terms with all Arab states - a stance which had made it acceptable to all sides as mediator in inter-Arab conflicts.

Since 1969, the close association with Egypt had taken various forms, ranging from the Tripoli charter and the abortive Federation of Arab Republics to the Sudan's rather solitary support of Egypt's peace process with Israel. This does not necessarily mean that there were no differences or strains in Sudanese-Egyptian relations during this period. In 1972-73 bilateral relations cooled after Numayri decided to opt out of his commitment to join the Federation of Arab Republics in order not to jeopardize the delicate quest for a peaceful settlement of the southern problem. Again in 1972, the Egyptians were dismayed by the Sudan's decision to resume diplomatic relations with the USA. (What actually irked the Egyptians was not the decision itself but the failure of Sudan to clear the matter first with Cairo). Relations with Egypt also became sour in 1979/80 over Egypt's unilateral peace process with Israel.

But all these differences were of a rather transient nature and did not seriously affect the established pattern of the new relationship. Indeed, it was a measure of the 'Finlandization' of Sudan's foreign policy that such strains in bilateral relations, particularly the latter ones, were quickly resolved, more often than not with Sudan conforming to the Egyptian position.

The setting in of 'Finlandization' should not be taken to imply that Sudan has abdicated its sovereignty or that Cairo now dictated Sudan's foreign policy: such a situation is the function of a 'satellite' rather than a 'Finlandized' relationship,

Nor does it mean that the new pattern of relations had been motivated by Sudanese fears of Egyptian invasion or intervention if Sudan took a different view in foreign affairs. On the contrary, Egyptian intervention had been invited by the regime in 1970, 1971, 1976 and 1981. Indeed, the 'finlandization' of Sudan's foreign policy becomes easily explicable in terms of the security considerations that had made such interventions necessary.

In May 1969, the 'ideologizing' of Sudan's foreign policy along the lines of Nasser's radical Arab nationalism was, in many ways, reminiscent of the early radicalism of the October revolution. But the death of Nasser in 1970 set the scene for drastic changes in Egypt which were to have profound repercussions in Sudan. While Sadat's move in May 1971 against the so-called 'centres of power' initiated a process de-Nasserization that was reflected in Egyptian foreign policy, Numayri's success in defeating the communist coup in July 1971, marked a sharp shift in Sudanese politics from an ideological posture to a pragmatic one, that was also mirrored in Sudanese foreign policy.

Both moves entailed drastic domestic and foreign policy reappraisals which pointed in the same direction and which, thus, provided a common ground of mutual interest. When Sadat moved in July 1971 to help Numayri crush the communist putsch, he was doing so as much for the interests and security of the Sudanese regime as for his own. Just as Moscow would never tolerate an anti-Soviet regime in Helsinki, Cairo would do all in its power to thwart the installation of an anti-Egyptian regime in Khartoum. The other side of the coin was that since the interests and the security of the Numayri regime had become so intertwined with those of Egypt, Sudan would not, indeed could not, take a foreign policy stand unacceptable or actually hostile to the Egyptian regime.

After the abortive communist coup, there followed a brief period of relative disengagement from external affairs during which the regime concentrated on the internal consolidation of its

authority, and on the successful conclusion of the Addis Ababa agreement of February 1972 that settled the long-standing southern conflict on the basis of regional autonomy for the south.

Sudan reactivated its close ties with Egypt in early June 1973, and the bilateral relations were further consolidated by the conclusion of the economic and political integration agreement in February 1974. Sudan continued backing Sadat's pro-Western policies and by its support of the Sinai disengagement agreement of September 1975, put the Numayri regime in the so-called 'moderate' Arab camp of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and on the side of American-sponsored Middle East policies.

The gradual shift from the Soviet Union Sudan which had begun after July 1971, crystallized by July 1976 (following yet another abortive coup) into a strong anti-Soviet and pro-Western orientation.⁽⁹⁾ The growing Soviet support for Ethiopia and Libya led to increasingly antagonistic statements by Numayri on Russian involvement in Africa. "The official view in Khartoum was that events in and around Sudan were inter-related: they were part of a coordinated strategy by the Soviet Union to undermine the Sudanese and Egyptian regimes which constituted a barrier to Soviet expansionism" (Legum, 1978). In May 1977, Sudan terminated the contracts of Soviet military advisers and scaled down the size of the Soviet embassy staff. .

The close nature of Sudanese-Egyptian relations was again highlighted when, in the immediate aftermath of the July failed coup, the two sides concluded a joint defence agreement which, in effect, formalized the existing military ties between the two countries. The agreement which was announced on 20 July 1976 after a joint visit by Numayri and Sadat to Jeddah to meet with King Khalid was first invoked to counter a threat from Ethiopia in January 1977. Following in Egypt's footsteps, the Sudanese regime adopted a policy of *Infitah* (opening to the West) which, inevitably, entailed greater dependency on western and Arab capital investment and, consequently a more pro-Western foreign policy orientation. By 1977, the Numayri regime had committed itself to the Cairo-Riyadh axis and by proxy, to Western strategies in Africa and the Arab world.

Then, on 19 November 1977, President Sadat made his dramatic and controversial visit to Jerusalem and set in motion a process that galvanized the whole Arab world, and in the case of Sudan, put the special Sudanese-Egyptian relationship to a severe and demanding test. Sudan extended immediate public endorsement of the Egyptian initiative which President Numayri described as a "bold and courageous step".⁽¹⁰⁾ But from the beginning it was clear that almost all the Arab states did not share that sentiment. Numayri's tour of some of the Arab states in mid-1978 in an attempt to diffuse the mounting Arab hostility towards Egypt, failed to find common ground for reconciliation, basically because Sadat's peace initiative constituted a clear-cut for-or-against issue in which no reconciliation was possible, and on which no Arab country could assume an acceptable or credible mediating role.

In any case the issue of reconciliation was rendered academic with the announcement, on 18 September 1978, of the Camp David agreements. The Sudan's official position on the agreements, which took the rather unusual form of 'a statement from the Presidency of the Republic', was ambivalent in its attitude.⁽¹¹⁾ The statement drew a distinction between the two agreements made at Camp David. It expressed support for the bilateral Egyptian-Israeli accords on the ground that Egypt was rightly taking steps to recover its occupied territories. The statement, however, was critical of the general framework of the second agreement as being

characterized by “vagueness, ambiguity and omission” on some of the fundamental issues such as the status of Jerusalem, sovereignty over the West Bank, the future of the Israeli settlements, and the problem of the refugees. The statement concluded that “if the quest for peace is to succeed, sufficient clarification of these issues must be made to convince other parties to participate in the process of achieving peace in a final and comprehensive settlement” (*al-Sahafa*, Khartoum, 21 October 1978). Sudan’s qualified support was immediately welcomed by the Egyptian media which selected only those passages in the statement favourable to Sadat’s position, and relayed them to the outside world as giving Sudan’s stamp of approval to the Camp David agreements.

It was becoming increasingly clear that Sudan’s close ties with Egypt were proving difficult for Sudan in dealing with its wider inter-Arab relations. In the Baghdad Arab summit conference, held in November 1970, Sudan, which was represented only at the ambassadorial level, adopted a low profile and played no significant role. This passive and ambivalent attitude can be seen as a reflection of the regime’s excessive sensitivity to Egyptian sensibilities.⁽¹²⁾

The same attitude of passivity and ambiguity was maintained when the Egyptian-Israeli treaty was signed in March 1979. But now that Sadat had raised the temperature with his defiance of Arab general opinion, Sudan’s failure to join the ranks of his Arab opponents exposed it to the possible imposition of economic sanctions. An ominous sign of such a possibility was the Iraqi decision, at the end of March 1978, to cut off oil supplies to Sudan.

Numayri’s pro-Egyptian stand also created serious domestic complications. The process of national reconciliation with former opposition elements – upon which the regime had based its internal policy - threatened to disintegrate because of the intense hostility of the opposition leaders to Sadat’s policies. Sadiq al-Mahdl, former leader of the National Front opposition, who had returned only in 1977, resigned all his official posts in October 1978 and left the country in protest against Numayri’s support of Sadat.⁽¹³⁾ In the face of opposition and pressure, both at home and abroad, the Sudanese regime began, in mid-1979, to emphasize a more neutral stance vis-à-vis the rift between Egypt and the Arab states. In an interview in June, Numayri stated that Sudan’s attitude towards Middle Eastern questions was based upon “the principles which we believe would lead to the advancement of the Arab cause”. Sudan, he said, would not be ‘categorized’ as belonging to one camp or the other. “We are part of the Arab world and seek to achieve our objectives under the auspices of the Arab League” (*Newsweek*, 11 June 1979). The new emphasis on a more independent non-aligned position in inter-Arab affairs, did not resolve Sudan’s painful dilemma of how to avoid joining the general Arab boycott of the Egyptian regime without incurring the same punitive measures that had been inflicted on Egypt. As one Arab observer put it, “Sudan tended to object to the peace treaty without condemning it and to accept the Baghdad conference resolutions without implementing them” (*al-Mustagbal*, Paris 16 June 1979)

The pressures on Numayri to make a final break with Egypt still continued to be enormous. The regime’s uneasy position was not made any less difficult by Sadat’s scathing verbal attacks on his Arab critics (‘dwarfs’ he called them, among other things), and by his charge, in September 1979, that Saudi Arabia and Libya were colluding against Sudan as part of a wider conspiracy against Egypt. Moreover, Sudan’s claims to neutrality were being consistently undermined by the Egyptian media which took every opportunity of emphasizing, and often distorting, any

Sudanese statement that could be even remotely construed as favourable to the Egyptian position.

These developments reflected Egyptian concern over the possibility of Sudan's defection at a time when bilateral relations were coming under some strain. Sudan had shown disquiet over the reported Egyptian offer of Nile waters for irrigating the Negev desert, and over some reports of Egyptian-Ethiopian contacts directed against Sudan (*Sudanow*, December 1979). President Numayri's decision to personally attend the Arab heads of state conference, held in Tunis in November 1979, seemed to underline Sudan's drift away from Egypt. This was followed in December by the recall of the Sudanese ambassador to Cairo – a move which was seen in Khartoum as heralding the imminent rupture of diplomatic relations with Cairo.⁽¹⁴⁾

But in January 1980, Numayri made a sudden about turn. He stated in mid-January that despite disagreements "relations with Egypt are stronger than with a number of other Arab states" (*The Middle East*, London 1980). Then, in late January, he declared that Sudan would not be breaking off diplomatic relations with Egypt after all, on the ground that the recall of the Sudanese ambassador was a "sufficient gesture of protest" (*al-Ayam*, 1 February 1980). The exchange of ambassadors between Egypt and Israel, in February 1980, put a new strain on the already troubled Sudanese-Egyptian relations. While Numayri still refrained from making a final break with Egypt, he began to distance himself from Sadat's position and an atmosphere of mutual indifference seemed to settle over the relations between the two countries by the spring of 1980.

Two factors might have drawn Sudan still further from Egypt. In the first place, the hardening effects of the Arab boycott of Egypt meant that Sudanese-Egyptian integration plans could well become a political and economic liability for the Sudan. Secondly, the dramatic rapprochement between the Sudan and Ethiopia during 1980 tended to weaken Sudanese-Egyptian security ties which had been originally strengthened in 1976 against a background of Ethiopian hostility. Yet, just as Sudan seemed poised to disentangle itself from its close association with Egypt, security considerations suddenly assumed new significance in late 1980 when Sudanese-Libyan relations took a turn for the worse and the Sudanese regime, once again, found itself falling back on the relative safety of its security arrangements with Egypt.

The event that triggered this development was the Libyan military intervention in the civil war in Chad, which predictably enough, was seen in Khartoum as yet another evidence of Soviet machinations and infiltration in Africa. Khartoum's concern over developments in Chad was shared, and enhanced, in Cairo. President Sadat was apparently worried that the Libyans, and the Russians behind them, might use Chad as a base of operations to destabilize Sudan and thus expose Egypt's southern flank. In January 1981, Sadat pledged immediate military backing for Sudan should it become the next target of Libya and Soviet strategy in the region. The Egyptian leader declared that the Libyan actions in Chad had created "a very dangerous situation because it threatens Sudan and what threatens Sudan constitutes a threat to Egypt".⁽¹⁵⁾

The Sudan's decision, in March 1981, to restore full diplomatic representation with Egypt was technically a violation of the 1978 Baghdad summit resolutions which called for a rupture of relations if Sadat signed a peace treaty with Israel. The Sudanese regime justified its action on the basis that Sudan had never broken off diplomatic relations with Egypt, and that the upgrading of relations was essential as a result of the threat posed to both countries by the Libyan military presence in Chad (*Sudanow*, April 1981). In April 1981, President Numayri announced his

intention to take the initiative in reconciling Arab differences precipitated by Egypt's unilateral peace efforts. He also expressed interest in aid from the United States for improving Sudanese air and naval facilities which in times of crisis could be made available to the USA and other friendly forces, presumably Egypt's.

Predictably, Numayri's belated call for reconciliation was welcomed by no Arab state except Egypt, and his public offer to the Americans seemed to be a curious move for a regime facing mounting opposition at home, increasing isolation in the Arab world, and potential retaliation from pro-Soviet neighbours.

As if to compound his own problems, Numayri invited Sadat to attend the 12th anniversary of his regime in May 1981. At the end of the visit, which was Sadat's first one to an Arab country since he signed the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, he accepted Numayri's invitation to meet his Arab critics at a summit conference, but said that he would make no concession on the peace treaty or the Camp David accords. It was not clear in what capacity Numayri was making the invitation. Numayri stated at the time that many Arab leaders would also accept the invitation but sources in Khartoum said that when Sudan's first approach was made to Saudi Arabia it was immediately rebuffed. In any event, Numayri was hardly in a position to play the role of mediator between Sadat and his Arab opponents. When Sadat visited Khartoum, Libya and Syria called upon the Arab League to take punitive measures against Sudan. The Syrians announced that they would not send an ambassador to Khartoum. In Beirut, a coordinated missile attack on the Sudanese, Egyptian and American embassies, which caused minor damages, was seen by Lebanese police sources as "a reaction to President Sadat's visit to Khartoum and the Sudanese call for an Arab summit conference to re-integrate Egypt within the Arab ranks". The silence of the so-called moderate Arab states - Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states - over Sadat's visit was interpreted in Khartoum as "tacit support for the Sudanese-Egyptian rapprochement" (*Sudanow* June 11981). However, some reliable sources said that the Saudis in particular were very unhappy with Sudan's close association with Egypt and had silently expressed their displeasure by exercising some economic pressures on Sudan.

Sudan increasing identification with Egypt and Western allies was underlined by Numayri's fierce anti-Sovietism, which could be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, it could be interpreted as a reflection of Egyptian and Sudanese perceptions of real, or imagined, Soviet threats to the two regimes. Secondly, Numayri might have thought that an anti-Soviet posture could be a useful device to please the Saudis and win the support of the Americans. According to the exiled opposition leader, Sharif Husayn al-Hindi, allegations of communist and Soviet plots were "merely fantasies dreamed up by Numayri to fleece the rich Arab states and give political justification to his attracting American forces to the Sudan" (*8 days*, London, 4 April 1981). Thirdly, Numayri's anti-Sovietism could be seen as a projection into foreign policy of his intense personal dislike of communism and the Soviet Union, dating back to the 1971 abortive communist coup against his regime. Whatever the causes of Numayri's anti-Sovietism, it had a negative impact not only on Soviet-Sudanese relations but also on Sudan's relations with some of its neighbours. It tended to invite pressures and reprisals from Soviet allies on the Sudan's borders thus creating the very security problem that drove Numayri still closer to Egypt and that provoked him to take an even more strident anti-Soviet posture. Witness the Sudan's reaction to the Libyan moves in Chad.

It is important at this juncture to make a distinction between the security of the Sudanese regime as such, and the security of the country as a whole, for the two are not necessarily identical. In the first place, while the close alliance with Egypt might ensure the survival of the Numayri regime - as it did in 1971 and 1976 - it could, nevertheless undermine the security of the nation if southern Sudanese resentment of, and northern internal opposition to, the Egyptian connection reached a boiling point. These two factors should not be underestimated. When President Sadat visited Khartoum in January 1979 to address the joint session of the Egyptian and Sudanese parliaments, a group of southern MPs delivered a memorandum to the meeting describing Egypt's policy as 'neocolonialist', and expressing the fear that Sudanese-Egyptian integration plans would lead to the south becoming 'a dumping ground' for Egypt's excess population (*The Guardian*, London, 26 January 1979). In the north, traditional political groupings (mainly Sadiq al-Mahdi's Ansar followers), Muslim fundamentalists, leftist elements (including the clandestine Sudan Communist Party) were all unified in their deep hostility towards President Sadat's regime. Former opposition leaders had consistently maintained that the interests of the country would be better served by the repudiation of the Egyptian alliance and by the adoption of a non-aligned policy toward the two superpowers.

Secondly, the country could face an economic catastrophe should the rich Arab state decide to impose mass economic sanctions against Sudan. That they refrained from doing so was less indicative of a tacit tolerance of Numayri's pro-Egyptian stand, than of their reluctance to destabilize the Sudanese regime for fear of paving the way to risky alternatives such as a leftist or militant Islamic regime. Thirdly, if the intimate Sudanese-Egyptian ties provoked any of the country's pro-Soviet neighbours, possibly Libya, to take military action against the Sudan, and if such a move entailed Egyptian military counter-intervention, the situation inside the country could become a recipe for civil war and revolution in which not only the regime but the whole country might disintegrate,

Despite internal opposition and external pressures Numayri opted for supporting the Egyptian regime - an option that could only be interpreted in terms of his apparent obsession with the question of security in which close ties with Egypt played a central role. This, of course, had been the case from 1969 onwards. What was different in the period since the Camp David agreements was that the Egyptian peace process with Israel introduced a new and potentially divisive element into the Sudanese-Egyptian relationship because it entailed the isolation of Egypt in the Arab world and highlighted the grave risks involved in supporting its policies. It was, to be sure, an agonizing period for Sudan, during which the regime was torn between the security considerations that made it essential to maintain the Egyptian connection, and the crucial necessity to avoid alienating the other Arab states. For a time Sudan continued to manoeuvre uneasily between the two opposing sides but the balancing act lacked credibility and, at some points, threatened to end up antagonizing both sides. In the end, the close Sudanese-Egyptian relations survived the demanding test of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and the general Arab boycott of Egypt. The implications for Sudan could be serious but the essential lesson was that Numayri's regime would not, or could not, extricate itself from the intricate ramifications of its special relationship with Egypt.

The assassination of President Sadat in Cairo on 6 October 1981, and Sudan's reaction to it, seemed to underline rather than undermine this committed posture. In the traumatic circumstances following the assassination, the Sudanese regime stood firmly behind the new

leadership in Cairo. President Numayri was one of only two Arab League heads of state to attend Sadat's funeral (the other was President Siyad Barre of Somalia), and, in a symbolic gesture of solidarity, he stayed in Cairo to participate in the national referendum that formalized the elevation of Husni Mubarak to the presidency.

The new Egyptian leadership would undoubtedly maintain, and might even enhance, the country's close ties with the Sudan. After Sadat's death US strategists were reported to be considering an airlift of Egyptian troops to Sudan under the cover of AWACs aircraft that had been deployed to patrol the Egyptian and Sudanese borders with Libya.⁽¹⁶⁾ Yet over-identification with US plans and interests could turn out to be a dubious and risky undertaking for the Sudanese regime. Excessive reliance on the American-Egyptian alliance might increase, rather than defuse, the hostility of pro-Soviet neighbours and, more seriously, it could provoke, rather than discourage, subversion from within by anti-American and anti-Egyptian elements.

Paradoxically enough, the very real possibility of these dangers had impelled the Sudanese regime to fortify even more strongly its Egyptian connection, and to press more urgently for a new alliance with the USA. Sadat's violent death had injected an element of uncertainty in the region and thus increased the vulnerability of Numayri's regime. Developments in and around Egypt would most certainly affect Sudan's internal situation and foreign policy orientation. But it seemed that nothing short of a radical change of regime in either country, or in both, would upset the pattern of 'Finlandization' that had characterized the relationship of the countries during the last decade.

Indeed, if the trend of Sudanese-Egyptian relations had led to more dependency, for security or other reasons, the nature of Sudan's special relationship with Egypt might then have become transformed from a 'Finlandized' pattern to a 'satellite' status. But instead Numayri's downfall in April 1985 opened a new era in Sudan's relations with Egypt, in particular, as well with a number of other countries as well.

NOTES

⁽¹⁾ In foreign policy terms, the two parliamentary periods (1956/58 and 1965/69) were mostly uneventful because the political parties were mainly preoccupied with domestic politics and the constant and intensive struggle for power. An exception could be made of the second government of Prime Minister Muhammad Ahmad Mahjub who played a significant role in mediating in inter-Arab affairs, and in rallying the Arab states during the traumatic circumstances following the June war of 1967. But, even then, Mahjub's diplomatic activities (which were suspected by his political opponents of being a deliberate cover for domestic neglect) were made against a background of a chaotic internal situation that undermined the effectiveness of Sudanese diplomacy and eventually paved the way for the military coup d'état in May 1969.

⁽²⁾ One foreign policy consideration was partly instrumental in the decision of Prime Minister 'Abdallah Khallil to hand over power to the military in November 1958. According to Holt, the Prime Minister was reported to have had a conversation with 'Abbud on 10 November during which he deplored the manner in which Nasser seemed to be having his way, and expressed his belief that only the Sudanese army could stand up to Egypt (Holt 1961, p.1B4).

⁽³⁾ Ahmad Khair recounts an anecdote that is perhaps illustrative of the live-and-let-live attitude of the 'Abbud regime. He recalls that at one point the US ambassador to Khartoum came to see him to ask permission for American aircraft carrying military equipment from Ethiopia to Libya to overfly Sudanese air-space. 'How high will it fly?' asked Ahmad Khair. 'Very high', answered the ambassador. 'Do you think' said Khair, 'anyone will look up through the clouds and see a plane flying so high? Why come and bother us about it?' 'Suppose it falls down?' the ambassador pointed out. Ahmad Khair then gave a 'verbal' permission to the Americans. A similar request by the Soviet Union was rejected but only because the Russians said they would not allow Sudanese inspection of the plane when it landed in Khartoum en route to its destination. Interview by Sally Ann Baynard, Khartoum, 9 July 1981.'

⁽⁴⁾ 'The agreement also included the setting up of a joint technical body to supervise research into other projects such as the Jonglei canal scheme, and to conduct on behalf of the two governments whatever negotiations might be necessary with other riparian countries' (Henderson 1966, p.135).

⁽⁵⁾ 'The southern rebellion, from Khartoum's point of view at least, suddenly became much more than an internal problem of integration. It was now seen as part of a much wider conspiracy against a progressive (and thus anti-Western) African radicalism which drew its inspiration from the socialist Arab north of Nasser and Ben Bella' (Howell and Hamid 1969, p.302-3).

⁽⁶⁾ The British in 1944 considered the possibility of the Sudan taking over the Muslim part of Eritrea. Although there might be much to be said in favour of this idea, the Sudan never developed irredentist aspirations in that direction. The support of the Eritrean rebels stemmed partly from a general dislike of the imperial nature of the Haile Selassie regime, and partly from a feeling of religious and cultural affinity with the Eritreans among most of sectors of Sudanese society.

⁽⁷⁾ There was little harmony in the second October government, each cabinet minister was advocating not a joint cabinet policy but rather the political platform of his own party. 'Such disharmony finally resulted in a dangerous and appalling muddle, when two ministers (one Islamic Charter Front, one National Unionist Party) were detained on a charge of smuggling arms from Syria. While the ICF insisted that the arms were destined for dissident Eritreans, the Umma ministers alleged that an armed coup was being

planned. The NUP claimed the whole affair was an 'imperialist conspiracy' - a charge not borne out by the Prime Minister, who said that he knew of the shipment but had assumed the arms were meant for the Congo' (Howell and Hamid 1969, p.307)

⁽⁸⁾ The term 'Finlandization' was first used by Richard Lowenthal in 1966 to describe the pattern of relations that is likely to emerge between Western Europe and the Soviet Union in the event of a breakup of the Atlantic Alliance. In that eventuality, Lowenthal argued, European-Soviet relations would be modeled on Finland's relationship with the Soviet Union. The term 'Finlandization' is not used in a derogatory sense; it does not mean accusing Finland of appeasement or of selling its independence. But it takes into account the deep-rooted ambiguity in the Finnish attitude towards the Soviet Union. Because of this, in international affairs Finland usually sides with the Soviet bloc, or at least refrains from taking an anti-Soviet stance.

⁽⁹⁾ In the period between 1971 and 1976, the regime had tried to balance relations between West and East by paying particular attention to Sudanese relations with China. Sudan's increasing estrangement from the Soviet Union was naturally a welcome development to the Chinese.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Numayri added: 'I believe those who oppose this step understand nothing of what is going on in the Arab region. We hope they will understand, we hope they will rejoice soon for what they are rejecting now'. *International Herald Tribune*, Paris, 23 November 1977.

⁽¹¹⁾ This unusual procedure indicated either that the government and SSU organs were divided over the issue or that, for reasons of his own the President had decided to take personal responsibility for stating Sudan's official stand.

⁽¹²⁾ In adopting such a passive attitude, the Numayri regime was probably doing a disservice to its Egyptian ally. If Sudan had been represented at a higher level in the Baghdad conference and had taken a more positive role, it is conceivable that some line of communication could have been kept open with Egypt.

⁽¹³⁾ The hostile attitude of the former opposition leaders towards the Egyptian regime went beyond the immediate issue of the peace treaty. According to Sadiq al-Mahdi, "Sudan's ties with Egypt had led it down a predictable path of support for the US and anti-Soviet initiatives in Africa ... This committed foreign policy was too inflexible. It invited reprisals from Soviet allies on Sudan's very borders. And by over-identifying with one 'super-power' it ignored the potential of Islam as a world force and restricted Sudan's freedom". *The Guardian*, London, 25 May 1979.

⁽¹⁴⁾ The official monthly *Sudanow* noted in December that Sudan was not interested in any peace settlement that failed to deliver the fundamental demands called for in Baghdad and Tunis. "Sudan would have to protect its own interests, should Egypt take any step that threatened to pull Sudan into the abyss with her. The exchange of ambassadors between Cairo and Tel Aviv might be just such a move". *Sudanow* warned that "it should not be thought Sudan would be deterred by its being beholden to Egypt for its territorial security".

⁽¹⁵⁾ *Al-Ahram*, Cairo 15 February 1981. According to *Sudanow*, "When Dr Kissinger once predicted that Russia's next target would be Sudan, President Sadat replied that there would never be any question of foreign intervention in Sudan - indicating that Egypt would take steps to prevent such move". *Sudanow* March 1981.

⁽¹⁶⁾ *Newsweek* 19 October 1981. A few days before Sadat's assassination, his Vice-President, Husni Mubarak, was in Washington to ask for faster delivery of American arms to the Sudan. Sadat's last joint

venture with the USA had been to begin intensive planning for a combined response to a Libyan attack on the Sudan or other pro-Western regimes in North Africa. *Ibid*

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