

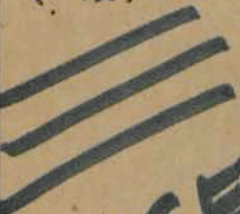
PREM 19/1144

Confidential Filing

Visit of President Numeiri

SUDAN

JULY 1980

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
17.7.80							
17.7.80							
28.7.80							
1.8.80							
24.1.83							
32.83							
9.12.83							
<div data-bbox="333 1095 725 1244" data-label="Text"><p>PREM</p></div> <div data-bbox="854 1106 1340 1287" data-label="Text"><p>A/1144</p></div>							
<div data-bbox="34 1393 367 1734" data-label="Text">  <p>CLOSED</p> </div>							

CONFIDENTIAL

VL/SR

cc MASTER SET



File

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

9 December 1983

Dear Sir,

Call by the President of the Sudan

President Nimeiri called on the Prime Minister at 3.20 pm this afternoon. I enclose a record of the conversation.

Yours ever

John Goss

P.F. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE
PRESIDENT OF THE SUDAN AT 3.20 PM ON FRIDAY 9 DECEMBER 1983
AT 10 DOWNING STREET

Present:

The Prime Minister

Mr. Luce

Mr. A.J. Coles

President Nimeiri

General Abdel Salam

Sudanese Ambassador

In reply to the Prime Minister's enquiry as to his health, President Nimeiri said that he was now feeling more rested.

The Prime Minister said that we in this country watched the situation in the Sudan with great interest but also with anxiety. The President's achievement in stopping the civil war in the south some years ago was much admired but for that very reason we watched any signs of unrest with concern. President Nimeiri said that peace and security was still being maintained in the south. The Sudan had bad neighbours who tried to subvert the Sudanese people. Ethiopia, Libya and South Yemen had come together in an agreement directed against the Sudan and were supported by the Soviet Union. The Russians were angry with the Sudan because it had been the first country to expel Soviet personnel. Egypt and Somalia had followed the Sudanese example. Moscow saw the Sudan as a strategic target in Africa - and regarded the Southern Sudan as the weak point in the Sudanese armoury.

Islamic laws had been introduced to support the Islamic way of life. The intention was not to interfere with non-Muslims but of course all had to be guided by the law. The Russians opposed his policy of strengthening his country through economic development rather than by acquiring arms from Moscow. The Soviet Union proclaimed the view that African countries should be given weapons with which to free themselves. It was not clear from what they were supposed to be freed. Moscow described his government as bad because it did not comply with Russian instructions. Libya was financing 24 camps for training Sudanese on the Ethiopian border.

/ Growing

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

Growing numbers of Eritrean refugees were reaching the Sudan, there were now half a million refugees including Ugandans and Chadians. The Sudan worked with the United Nations to ensure that the refugees received proper care and attention.

The Prime Minister said that she had met President Obote at CHOGM. Her impression was that he was at last bringing back some order and liberty to Uganda. President Nimeiri said that the Sudan was helping him in this respect.

The Prime Minister then reverted to the question of Islamic laws. What was their impact on the south? President Nimeiri said that one-fifth of the southerners were Muslim, one-fifth Christian and the rest were pagans. The Prime Minister asked what changes in practice had come about. There had been much comment in this country. President Nimeiri said that he assumed that we ourselves wished to stop alcoholism, adultery and stealing. This was his aim. Under the Shari'a system, sentences could be more lenient than under the previous law. For example, there was a system whereby the offender could pay compensation to the aggrieved and thus evade sentence. He himself had read the Bible several times and knew that it stated that where a person erred, his hand should be cut off. The view taken in the Sudan was that if someone was guilty of theft, it was the duty of the Government to cut off his hand. The purpose under Islamic law was to set a deterrent for others. The Prime Minister said that she believed that most religions had reinterpreted their original law according to more civilised standards. We in this country would not wish to envisage the cutting off of hands today. President Nimeiri repeated that it was necessary to establish a deterrent. He recalled that the Prime Minister had refused to release a prisoner in Northern Ireland who was on hunger strike because of the impact that would have had on others. The Prime Minister said that the person in question had been free to choose whether to go on hunger strike or not. But whatever his decision, we would not have done more than keep him in prison.

We in this country did not like to hear criticism of the Sudan. The river of the Sudan and the river of Britain had flowed together in history. So we had anxieties for the future.

CONFIDENTIAL

/ President Nimeiri

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

President Nimeiri said that Britain had abolished capital punishment some years ago but it was very difficult to do this in the Sudan. The Prime Minister said that in her personal view this sentence should sometimes be carried out - in the case of the most terrible and barbaric crimes.

She wished to raise with the President the case of Mr. Booth who had just been sentenced to 25 lashes plus a fine and imprisonment for being in charge of his company's legally imported beer stocks while awaiting official guidance on how to handle them. We were particularly concerned because this had happened during the transitional period between the old law and the new. President Nimeiri said that this had been a wrong decision. Lashes should be given for drinking, not for possessing drink. He would investigate the matter.

Mr. Luce said that we had many British citizens in the Sudan. Considerable problems could arise if they were suddenly subjected to a way of life which they did not understand. President Nimeiri said that the British Ambassador in Khartoum had discussed this subject with him. He had raised with the Ambassador the case of two British citizens who had approached his own Residence in an inebriated condition and who had not stopped when challenged by the guard.

The Prime Minister asked whether the new Islamic laws were popular, for example in the South. President Nimeiri said that they were because they were not directed against anyone. The purpose of the laws was to support those who wished to lead a good life. The aim was to stop drinking, adultery and theft. It was of interest that the first person in the Sudan who had tried to stop the consumption of alcohol was Abu Alier who had found that Southerners were not able to work because of their consumption of alcohol. Five per cent of those who consumed alcohol were addicts. Nothing could be done about this. But the aim was to deal with the ninety-five per cent.

/ Mr. Luce

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 4 -

Mr. Luce said that there was tremendous affection for the Sudan in this country and this was shared by MPs of all parties. We had considerable trade with the Sudan and we had an important economic and military assistance programme. There was great admiration for the President's statesmanship when, ten years ago, he had brought the war in the South to an end. We wanted the President to succeed. That was our anxiety. President Nimeiri said that there was a big campaign against his Government. A number of magazines in London and in Paris, financed by Libya, were hostile to the Sudan. Libya was training Sudanese to engage in subversion. Qadhafi thought that because he (Nimeiri) was in favour of Camp David and opposed to Libyan actions in Northern Chad, he must bring down the Sudanese Government.

The President then raised the question of Ethiopia. He hoped to see Mengistu in the next day or so. The Prime Minister said that on the last occasion when the President had visited London he had said that he hoped to persuade Mengistu to move away from the Soviet Union. President Nimeiri said that that possibility had existed at that time. He had asked Saudi Arabia to help by supplying oil to Ethiopia but the Saudis had demurred. He had asked the United States for assistance but they were too slow. The Russians were alert to the possibility that their hold on Mengistu might be weakened so they were cultivating his Deputy. Soviet intervention in Ethiopia showed a certain similarity with events in Grenada and Afghanistan. The Prime Minister said that she noted that there was little hope of detaching Mengistu from the Soviet Union. But she could not understand why, as the President had implied, he was afraid of his Deputy. These things were normally dealt with fairly easily in the Communist world. President Nimeiri said that Mengistu was inhibited by the presence of large numbers of Russians, Cubans and East Germans in Ethiopia.

/The Prime Minister

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

The Prime Minister asked about the condition of ordinary Ethiopians. President Nimeiri said that they had no voice. The only exception was the army. A number of Ethiopian officers had come to the Sudan but Mengistu had killed a large proportion of the officer class. He had attacked Eritrea six times but had not succeeded because his army was not interested in conflict with the Eritrean people. He was very angry with the Sudan because he believed that the Sudan had helped the resistance in Eritrea.

The Prime Minister said that we were concerned about the Princesses of the former Imperial Family who were no threat to anyone. We sometimes asked our friends in Africa to bring pressure to bear on Mengistu. President Nimeiri said that he had raised this matter with Mengistu who had been negative. Mengistu wanted to secure the return of members of the Royal Family who were outside Ethiopia and also some former members of the armed forces who were in the Sudan. He lived in an ivory tower. When he (Nimeiri) had visited him last year he had gone to Mengistu's home and the Ethiopian officers who had accompanied his party had said that it was the first time that they had seen the building. The Prime Minister asked how then pressure could be brought to bear on the Ethiopian regime. The Sudanese Ambassador [redacted] said that the first thing was to get the Cubans and other foreigners out. Then the Ethiopian people would express themselves. President Nimeiri said that the Ethiopian Government controlled only the towns, not the countryside.

In reply to a question from the Prime Minister about the economic situation in the Sudan, President Nimeiri said that the Sudan would become self-sufficient in sugar this year. But there was now a problem of electric power. A company called Coppernile, a subsidiary of NEI, had been supposed to complete a new project in Khartoum this October. But the company were now saying that they might not even finish it by next August. So emergency generators were needed. The Prime Minister said that she was aware of this problem but

/ would the

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 6 -

would the President want help with these generators even if it meant that we had to reduce the balance of payments support which we expected to offer shortly? President Nimeiri said that his priority was balance of payments support. The Prime Minister said that we would examine the question of whether we could help with the generators.

President Nimeiri said that he wished to raise one other matter. No British company had a permanent office in Khartoum. He much wanted Lonhro to establish such an office and to help with a number of projects.

In conclusion, President Nimeiri said that he would be passing through Cairo on his way to Nairobi where, on 10 December, he expected to meet a number of Heads of State.

The conversation ended at 1610.

A.F.C.

9 December 1983

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

9 December 1983

Dear John,

Call by President Nimeiri: Aid

You asked us to reconsider urgently the line in the brief which we provided last night for President Nimeiri's call on the Prime Minister this afternoon on the question of how to respond to the President's request for aid funds to cover the purchase of gas turbines.

I have asked ODA to re-examine this point. I now enclose a supplementary brief which sets out the facts and provides a revised line to take. This brief has been seen by Mr Raison, but not by the Foreign Secretary, who has not yet returned from Brussels.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

6/79.
CALL BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI OF SUDAN ON THE PRIME MINISTER

FRIDAY, 9 DECEMBER 1983 AT 3.15 PM

AID

Line to Take

Recognise your problems, but gas turbines a very expensive investment. Not sure they could all be in place by March. Would probably affect amount of balance of payments aid we hope to pledge at next week's Consultative Group. Is not that top priority? /If pursued/ Will ask Mr Raison to examine urgently.

Essential Facts

1. There has been a chronic shortage of power in the Khartoum area for several years and this continues. The IBRD devised Power III project begun in 1981 is designed to increase electricity production and transmission to reduce the shortage. ODA's contribution to Power III is £74m for a 40 MW extension to the existing Burri power station in Khartoum and a new 60 MW station at Khartoum North. The Burri extension is being commissioned. The Khartoum North station is seriously delayed primarily due to lack of performance by the British contractor, Northern Engineering Industries Projects (NEIP). The lack of expected 30 MW from Khartoum North by March is likely to mean power cuts in Khartoum as in previous years.
2. In addition to Power III ODA is financing the continuing rehabilitation, operation and maintenance of the old Burri station at an estimated cost of £8m over 3 years. When this assistance was agreed the alternative of gas turbines was considered but rejected on economic grounds given their operating costs.
3. However, because of the immediate shortages the Sudanese National Electricity Corporation have asked whether ODA would, in addition, finance a £9m package of gas turbines from Humphreys & Glasgow (a member of the Khartoum North consortium) and GEC. To date this has been rejected on the basis that ODA did not have the funds and Aid Trade Provision could not be considered because Sudan is off cover.
4. It is true that gas turbines are the only practicable way of meeting short-term shortfalls in generating capacity. However, they are uneconomic in the longer term. There are doubts whether all the turbines could be in place by March.

/If



If pursued, because of the timescale, ODA's normal approval procedures would have to be waived and normal economic criteria would not apply.

5. Once Khartoum North is on stream the mobile gas turbines could be used elsewhere to reinforce an existing system. If there are no further major problems the first 30 MW unit at Khartoum may be operational by August and the second by the end of 1984.

6. Subject to Mr Raison's approval it is proposed that the UK Delegation to the Sudan Consultative Group 14-16 December in Paris would make a conditional pledge of £5m towards Sudan's balance of payments in 1984. The funds would be available from April 1984 and the potential priority candidates we had in mind are agro-chemicals, vehicle spares, veterinary drugs, sugar and textile factory spares, and port equipment. If it was decided to provide the gas turbines their cost may have to absorb part or all of the £5m. We do not know what the Sudanese reaction to this would be.

7. If the Prime Minister does not wish to turn down the President's request immediately she may wish to say that Mr Raison will examine the matter urgently.

Mediterranean and Near East Department

ODA

9 December 1983



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 December 1983

Dear John,

M

President Nimeiri of the Sudan

I enclose a brief, consisting of points to make and background, for the call on the Prime Minister by President Nimeiri at 3/15 p.m. on Friday 9 December. We agreed that Mr Luce would be present for this call.

Our reports on President Nimeiri's recent visits to Paris and Washington show that, though both the French and the Americans share our anxieties about the effect of President Nimeiri's policies on the Southern Sudan, both failed to express their concern to him. This is a pity because it will tend to confirm President Nimeiri in his opinion (which we believe to be misguided) that the troubles in the South are largely due to Ethiopian meddling, and not to discontent at his own policies. We therefore hope that the Prime Minister will agree to broach these points. This will not be easy, bearing in mind that President Nimeiri tends to react very badly to criticism direct or implied. But Mr Luce knows President Nimeiri and may be able to help put this point across.

Points no 10 and no 11 may be particularly sensitive for President Nimeiri. But if he presses ahead on his present course, reactions in Parliament here are likely to be bad. Moreover we have been asked for help by Mr Booth's employers, John Mowlem & Co, about his case, and the matter deserves attention at the highest level.

One question which has been covered in the background brief, but is not mentioned in the points to make, is the sale of strikemasters. This is a sensitive topic: if they were ever used for repression in the South, there could be a strong reaction in Parliament. But Mr Luce has suggested that this point is best covered in a short meeting of this kind by setting out in general terms our concern about the South (along the lines of paragraph 2 above) and referring in terms to the strikemaster problem only if a natural opportunity to do so occurs.

/You

CONFIDENTIAL



flog A. You might wish to consider drawing the Prime Minister's attention, in connection with this call, to the JIC assessment on the Sudan in the Weekly Survey of Intelligence for 25 November-1 December.

In the absence of the Foreign Secretary in Brussels, Mr Luce has seen this letter and its enclosures, and agrees.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI OF SUDAN:
9 DECEMBER 1983

Points to Make

Bilateral Relations

1. Have noted President's busy schedule over the last month including medical treatment. Hope he is well and has managed to rest while in Britain.

Falklands

2. Grateful for the Sudanese abstention on the Argentinian resolution at UN General Assembly.

3. Our aid (an annual level of £30 million the largest budget for any non-Commonwealth country) and the British Army Training Team demonstrate our continuing support.

4. Sympathetic to Sudan's economic problems. Will be deciding our position for the Paris Consultative Group Meeting on 14/16 December very shortly.

5. [Defensive] Unable to meet request for help with mobile gas turbines. Already heavily committed to power sector and have no additional funds available.

6. [Defensive] Aid is not available to make military purchases.

Bilateral problems

7. BBC: The BBC seeks to report objectively (but may make occasional mistakes in facts). No question of a British campaign against islamisation.

8. Have heard about recent changes that the President has introduced on the internal scene. Would be very interested to learn from him personally the reasons for them, the progress being made with them, and how he thinks they have been received.

9. How does the President see the present prospects for reconciliation with the South, of which he is the principal architect? Do the reforms cause particular problems there?

10. Concern for the safety of British subjects working on aid and development projects should the security situation worsen.

11 workers including 2 Britons have already been kidnapped (but quickly released). The implications for economic development are worrying.

11. The President should be aware of the danger that public executions and amputations under islamic law may harm the British public's image of Sudan as a friendly and tolerant country.

12. A British citizen, Mr Booth, has just been sentenced to 25 lashes plus a fine and imprisonment for the minor offence of being in charge of his company's legally imported beer stocks while awaiting official guidance on how to handle them. He is appealing. Such cases are only too apt to cause unnecessary damage. Do not condone breaking of host country's laws, but unintentional transgression during transitional period seems forgivable.

Foreign affairs

The President has travelled far during last month. Would be interested to hear about his impressions.

Egypt

Have relations developed since signing of integration agreement?

Libya/Chad

Prospects of a solution to Chad dispute? Any prospect of improved relations with Libya?

Ethiopia

Hope that recent tensions can be reduced and some degree of dialogue maintained with Ethiopia. We would like to encourage Mengistu to strengthen ties with West. Any scope for negotiations between Ethiopia and Eritrean secessionist movements?



CALL BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI OF SUDAN 9 DECEMBER

Essential Facts

NIMEIRI'S VISIT TO LONDON

1. President Nimeiri left the Sudan on 8 November on visits to Rome, Paris and Washington. He was received in all three countries by their Presidents and had talks on a number of matters including the Middle East and Africa. In Rome he met the Pope.
2. While in Washington President Nimeiri underwent medical treatment (he has suffered from hypertension). The visit to Britain (3-9 December) is primarily to rest. The President will be much occupied by the deteriorating internal situation and Sudan's severe economic problems.

ANGLO SUDANESE RELATIONS

3. Sudan was under British Administration from 1898 to 1956 and her ties with Britain remain strong and friendly. Our civil aid was £30m in 1983/84 including refugee assistance. Programme concentrates on essential infrastructure including power and natural resource development. Our largest contribution is to £74m Power III project. Further assistance in this sector has been refused owing to lack of funds: since Sudan is off ECGD cover there is no possibility of Aid Trade Provision help either. Sudan also receives significant military assistance (£510000 in 1983/84) through the British Army Training Team and courses in Britain, though given Sudan's precarious finances Defence Sales are small. The Sudan provides useful opportunities for infantry training some 100 men of 22 SAS will complete such an exercise on 10 December. The Sudanese are in deep trouble financially and look to us for both political and economic help, with the IMF, the Paris Club and in arranging additional emergency aid. President Nimeiri's regime is friendly and pro-Western taking a moderate line on the Middle Eastern conflict and a constructive line on African problems. The Sudanese have been consistently helpful over the Falklands question. There is a continual flow of Sudanese ministers and businessmen to London. Trade which is largely aid linked is massively in UK favour (UK

exports £82.1m; imports from Sudan £6.5 in 1982) Mr Hurd visited Sudan in 1981. Our Ambassador has had good access to the President.

Bilateral Problems

4. The President's recent policies towards the South (see para 10) have led to an increasing number of irritations in our relations which may well worsen as the situation deteriorates:

a) The introduction of Islamic law in September 1983 and the absence of guidance as to how far it will be applied to non-Muslims has led to a deterioration in relations between North and South and a consequent worsening of the security situation. This led to the kidnapping, in two separate incidents of 11 expatriates (including two British citizens) working on oil and development projects. All those kidnapped were subsequently released in reasonable shape without intervention by the Sudanese security forces. An American citizen working for an oil company has since been killed by bandits.

b) Absence of guidance about the interpretation of the new laws on alcohol have led to the arrest of a British citizen, Mr David Booth, of Mowlem and Company for trading in alcohol. Mr Booth was keyholder for his company's supply of legally imported alcohol and was awaiting official clarification of what to do with it when arrested. Despite a written opinion that there was no case to answer, Mr Booth has been sentenced to 25 lashes, a substantial fine and 6 months in gaol. He is appealing.

c) BBC. Since the introduction of Islamic law the BBC has been repeatedly attacked for its reporting of Sudanese affairs which has been generally accurate. President Nimeiri is reported as claiming that the British are leading a public conspiracy against his Islamic reforms.

d) Strikemaster. British Aerospace re-signed a contract to supply ten Strikemaster aircraft (ground attack and pilot training) valued at £24m. The aircraft are suitable for counter insurgency work and could be used against the South should the situation deteriorate further. The Sudanese have paid for the first three and following

ministerial approval they have now been delivered. Because of the internal situation approval was limited to the first three only and approval of licences for delivery of the remainder (to be phased over 20 months) will be given only subject to an assessment of the situation at the time. There have been no other major sales of Defence equipment in recent years. Sudan dependent on foreign aid largely from US (but also Egypt, France and China).

INTERNAL SITUATION

Economic

5. Sudan is the largest country in Africa (1 million square miles) and one of the poorest (average income per capita \$380). Under populated and suffering a brain-drain Sudan has been a victim of the oil crisis. Indigenous oil deposits hold out some hope for the future and a major pipeline is planned though production will not begin for several years. Sudan faces a balance of payments and debt servicing crisis. Current IMF agreements include a standby arrangement for SDR 170 million for 1983. The Sudanese have already imposed some severe measures (increases in commodity prices including petrol and exchange rate adjustments).

6. Rescheduling of Sudan's external debt of around \$8 billion and generous assistance of aid community required. A Consultative meeting of major aid donors and creditors will be held in Paris on 14-15 December. UK will, subject to final ministerial agreement, pledge an additional £5 million balance of payment support (conditional on agreement with the IMF and on satisfactory rescheduling of debts).

7. Sudan has a major problem with refugees from Ethiopia, Uganda and Chad who have placed an additional burden on the economy. There are currently 570,000 refugees in the country.

Political

8. The present Government came to power in a virtually bloodless coup d'etat. Authority is vested in an executive President, Nimeiri, elected in 1971 and re-elected in 1983. Officially there is a single party, the Sudanese Socialist Union, which cuts across regional and sectarian loyalties, which are still strong and which

form the basis for the main opposition groups.

9. The economy has long been Nimeiri's chief worry. He has had little option but to impose severe IMF conditions but largely got away with it. Ultimately Nimeiri has to rely on the Army but, despite rumours of plots, there is no evidence of its willingness to support an alternative President, and there is at present no focus for serious political opposition.

10. Nevertheless, following a period of quiescence brought about by the Addis Ababa agreement of 1972 which brought to an end the 17 year civil war between North and South, relations between North and South have again deteriorated. Despite Nimeiri's claims of foreign intervention (by Libya and Ethiopia) this has been brought about largely by his own policies which Southerners regard as an abrogation of the 1972 agreement. Attempts to rotate southern soldiers to the North in May led to mutinies and defections to dissident groups like Anyanya II. Then in June Nimeiri decreed that the Southern region should be redivided into the three old regions, an act which sought to profit from traditional rivalries temporarily set various tribal groups and regional interests against one another. Finally in September he introduced Islamic Law which is seen by all Southerners as a serious threat and which seems, in the absence of any concessions by Nimeiri, likely to unite them against the Muslim North and lead the country back to civil war. The security situation has already deteriorated badly with much of two of the southern regions being prey to dissident activity and even the legitimate politicians of the South prepared to attack Nimeiri's policies publically. Even in the North the introduction of Islamic law has been criticised for its hastiness and opportunism leading to the imprisonment of one important opposition figure, Sadiq al-Mahdi leader of the large Ansar sect.

Foreign Policy

11. Sudan's foreign policy strives to maintain a balance between Egypt, her military guarantor against Libya and Ethiopia and the oil-rich states on whom she relies for economic support. She has leaned closer to the West since the abortive Communist coup of 1971 and the consequent increase in economic dependence on Western aid

and finance. Following the Libyan invasion of Chad Sudan veered closer to Egypt and in 1983 Sudan and Egypt signed an integration agreement though this has so far had little practical effect. United States involvement has also increased greatly. Relations with Libya are bad and the threat of Libyan subversion remains though Nimeiri is inclined to exaggerate this to suit his own ends. Relations with Ethiopia are also bad. Sudan has long provided asylum for Eritrean secessionists and Ethiopia provides a refuge for Southern Sudanese dissidents though despite Nimeiri's claims there is little evidence that they are actively threatening Sudan's security.

12. Sudan takes little part in the search for an Arab/Israel solution where they fall into the moderate camp broadly supporting the Egyptian line. Nimeiri has shown great interest in solving the Chad dispute though Ethiopia is currently leading mediation efforts.

FILE 54

8 December, 1983

President Nimeiri of the Sudan

Thank you for your letter of 7 December. As I told Roger Bone on the telephone this morning, the Prime Minister would be glad to see President Nimeiri at 1515 on Friday, 9 December.

A. J. COLES

P. F. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office



10 DOWNING STREET



Prime Minister.

President of the Sudan.

He is in London and would like
to see you.

Agree to receive him at
15.15 on Friday, 9 December?

Yes out A.S.C. $\frac{7}{12}$



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

7 December 1983

Dear John,

President Nimeiri of the Sudan

President Nimeiri of the Sudan arrived in London on 3 December for a short private visit (he leaves late on 9 December). The President is returning from a long trip during which he visited Rome, Paris and Washington, where he saw Presidents Pertini, Mitterrand and Reagan respectively. While in Washington he received medical treatment. The main purpose of his visit here is to rest following treatment. As I mentioned on the telephone, he has, however, said he would like to see the Prime Minister on 9 December, if at all possible.

Our relations with Sudan are good; we have close military, aid and commercial ties with the country. In recent years the Nimeiri regime has been consistently friendly towards the UK and helpful to us over a number of issues, including the Falklands. Although weakened by internal political and economic problems, Sudan is an important pro-Western influence in the Horn of Africa and, to a lesser extent, within the Middle East. President Nimeiri represents a moderate voice in the Arab world and in Africa. He has consistently advocated peaceful settlement of African disputes, for example in Chad, the Western Sahara, Ogaden and Eritrea. Nevertheless recent developments within Sudan give some cause for concern for the future stability of the country and its development and it would be a useful opportunity to express our concern to the President in person. We therefore recommend that the Prime Minister agree to see President Nimeiri briefly on 9 December if possible.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 1AA



7 DEC 1983





Sud

SUDAN

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

3 February 1983

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your kind letter of 3 February conveying the thanks of His Excellency President Gaafar Mohamed Nimeiri for the facilities provided for him by Her Majesty's Government during his recent private visit.

The Prime Minister greatly enjoyed her meeting with the President and will be grateful if you could convey to His Excellency her best wishes and greetings.

A. J. COLES

His Excellency Sayed Nasr El-Din Mustafa

EMBASSY
OF
THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN
ST. JAMES'S
LONDON, S.W. 1.

سفارة
جمهورية السودان الديمقراطية
لندن

3rd February, 1983

Prime Minister

I have acknowledged.

A.S.C. 2

Dear Prime Minister,

His Excellency President Gaafar Mohamed Nimeiri has asked me, at the end of his private visit to the United Kingdom, to extend to you personally his sincere thanks and appreciation for all the assistance and facilities kindly provided for him by Her Majesty's Government which made his brief stay in your great city both most comfortable and memorable.

His Excellency was delighted to have the opportunity of meeting you and enjoyed the friendly conversation and fruitful discussions you had together, and he particularly appreciated your interest in Sudan's economic problems of current deficits and development financing.

The President looks forward to a more opportune time for further talks and wider discussions.

In conclusion I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Nasr El-Din Mustafa
Nasr El-Din Mustafa,
Ambassador.

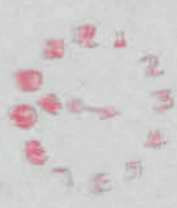
The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP.,
10 Downing Street,
London S.W.1.

مجلس الوزراء
الرياض



الجمهورية العربية السعودية
Ministry of Education
Riyadh

3 APR 1985



cc MASTER



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 January 1983

Dear John,

Call by President Nimeiri

President Nimeiri called on the Prime Minister at 1030 today. I enclose a record of the conversation.

Yours ever

John Holmes

John Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE
PRESIDENT OF THE SUDAN AT 1030 ON MONDAY 24 JANUARY 1983

Present: Prime Minister President Nimeiri
 Sir John Leahy The Sudanese Ambassador
 Mr. A.J. Coles

* * * * *

The Prime Minister enquired as to the state of the President's health. President Nimeiri said that he was quite well. He had received medical treatment in the United States. He was grateful for the opportunity to meet the Prime Minister. Britain and the Sudan were friendly countries.

After thanking the President for the Sudan's support during the Falklands crisis, the Prime Minister enquired about the Sudan's domestic problems. She believed that the agreement that President Nimeiri had reached with the IMF had been courageous.

President Nimeiri said that he had begun to execute the IMF programme. There had initially been some domestic opposition, but the programme was now accepted. The Sudanese had to work hard. Basically, they were not a poor people. There was land, water and human resources. But these days workers thought they could achieve higher wages through strikes and demonstrations. He believed in exposing the problems frankly to the people. Most of the Sudan's current problems stemmed from surrounding countries such as Ethiopia, Uganda, Zaire, the Central African Republic and Libya. The Sudan was unlucky with its neighbours. Out of nine countries, only Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Kenya were stable. The Sudan received many refugees from the rest.

Sir John Leahy enquired about the state of the Sudan's relations with Ethiopia. President Nimeiri said that he was working for a good relationship but Ethiopia was subject to pressure from the Soviet Union and Libya. Sir John Leahy said that he was hoping to visit the Horn shortly, partly to check on reports that

CONFIDENTIAL / Ethiopia

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

Ethiopia was coming more and more under Soviet influence. President Nimeiri said that Ethiopia was a poor country, racked by civil war. There was still a very bad drought. Many farmers had entered the army which had swollen to 200,000 troops compared to the 50,000 of the Sudan. The soldiers were not paid salaries and had to live off the land.

President Nimeiri said that the Sudan was working hard to achieved its development aims. He was very grateful for British help especially on the Power III project. The Prime Minister said that we hoped that our aid would be used to help with the fundamental problems. What was the chief difficulty in achieving economic growth? President Nimeiri said that the main problem was inflation. Each project cost more than was anticipated. Sir John Leahy asked whether the Sudan Government had had some difficulty in financing the local costs of the Power project. The Sudanese Ambassador said that this problem was now solved. The Government attached the highest priority to this project in allocating resources. So the main UK contractor should not worry unduly.

The Prime Minister observed that the OAU had faltered since President Nimeiri had ceased to be Chairman. President Nimeiri said that he had been opposed to the last session in Tripoli. The Sudanese knew that the OAU could not function with Qadhafi at its head. It was very difficult for a Sudanese delegation to visit Libya safely. Qadhafi was angry with the Sudan for backing Egypt over the Camp David agreement. He was trying to change the Sudanese regime and his activities were indeed one of the Sudan's major problems. He was also attempting to invade Chad secretly, through subversion. The Sudan, together with France and the United States, was supporting Chad against these attempts. But it was necessary for all peace loving countries to come together against Qadhafi. He interfered everywhere, even in Northern Ireland. In London he financed a number of Arabic magazines which were working against the Sudan. Sir John Leahy said that we were well aware of these activities and kept a close eye on the legality of what was written in the magazines.

CONFIDENTIAL

/ President Nimeiri

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

President Nimeiri referred to the agreement which Libya had made with South Yemen and Ethiopia; which was directed against Saudi Arabia, North Yemen and Oman in Arabia and against the Sudan, Egypt and other countries in Africa. The agreement served Soviet strategy in the area. The Sudanese Ambassador observed that the three participating countries were neither all Arab, all African or all Muslim. The only linking factor was the Soviet connection.

The Prime Minister pointed out that it was the West which gave genuine development aid. The Russians merely gave, or rather sold, weapons of destruction. President Nimeiri recalled the activities of the Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow which was really a device for training Communist leaders in developing countries. Sir John Leahy thought that there were signs of disillusionment with the Soviet Union in Mozambique, Angola and West Africa.

/ President Nimeiri

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 4 -

President Nimeiri said that he believed that the Sudan was a model of the way in which Western support could benefit a developing country. If the model succeeded, other African countries would turn to the West. He had earlier told Mengistu that if he moved away from the Soviet Union he (Nimeiri) could ensure that the West supported him. A start had been made on improving relations but the Russians and Libyans had moved in quickly to sever the new relationship, Sir John Leahy asked whether this meant that there was a real possibility of drawing Ethiopia away from the Soviet Union. President Nimeiri considered that there was. There were nationalist groups in Ethiopia. The Sudan was now concentrating on establishing a good relationship with the Ethiopian Minister of Defence who wanted to reduce Soviet influence. In the last few months there had been a rising in the Ethiopian army against the Soviet presence. The Prime Minister commented that we should reflect further on the possibility of working to reduce the Soviet presence. It would require a combined effort.

President Nimeiri asked how relations were between the UK and Libya. Sir John Leahy replied that they were very bad and the Prime Minister recalled the difficulties we had had earlier with the Libyan Office in London.

In reply to a question from President Nimeiri, the Prime Minister explained the current position about the possible visit to London by an Arab League Delegation. It was impossible for her to receive a representative of the PLO but she hoped that a former Mayor, or another Palestinian, would represent the Palestinian people. We were not only ready to receive a delegation on 7/8 February, we actively wished to receive one. We had been forthright in upholding the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. President Nimeiri said that he wanted the issue to be solved. All Arabs believed that the PLO were the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Prime Minister repeated that she was very willing to talk to Palestinian representatives but we had a special problem with the PLO which, for example, had had links with the Northern Ireland situation in the past.

/ President Nimeiri

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

President Nimeiri said that he had heard yesterday that Yasser Arafat had recently had a meeting with Israeli leaders.

The Prime Minister referred to a report which we had just received that over the weekend a correspondent for the BBC and Guardian in Khartoum had been arrested. These sort of incidents could receive a good deal of attention in the media. President Nimeiri promised to make enquiries.

As the discussion was ending, Sir John Leahy raised with the Sudanese Ambassador the question of compensation for British firms (Khartoum telegram No. 30 of 22 January). He explained to the Ambassador that the idea that British aid money should be used to compensate the firms in question was not a practical possibility.

The conversation ended at 1120 hours.

A.J.C.

24 January 1983

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

I have asked Sir John
Leahy to attend as well.

21 January 1983

A.S.C. 21/1

Dear John,

Call by President Nimeiri

The Prime Minister has agreed to see President Nimeiri of Sudan at 1030 on Monday 24 January at 10 Downing Street. The President has asked to be accompanied by the Sudanese Ambassador, Mr Nasr el Din Mustafa Ahmed.

/ I enclose a single brief, covering bilateral, internal and
/ Middle East issues for the call and personality notes on the President and the Ambassador. The Prime Minister last met President Nimeiri, who speaks good English, in July 1980.

The Arab/Israel brief assumes an announcement by the Moroccans on 22 January that the Arab League visit is going ahead. If the announcement is not made, paragraph 12 of the points to make will need to be amended accordingly.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

John Holmes

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI OF SUDAN:
24 JANUARY 1983

Points to Make

Bilateral Relations

1. Glad to hear that President is fully recovered from his recent illness. Hope he manages to rest in Britain.

2. Our aid (our second largest budget after India) and British Army Training Team evidence of our continuing support for Sudan.

3. Sympathetic to Sudan's economic problems. UK played full part in Paris Consultative Group meetings. Pledged £7 million additional aid.

Bilateral Problems

4. British claimants owed £1.1 million for nationalisations. Understand Finance Ministry are working on a plan to start payments. This is important to those concerned.

5. Glad to see that problems over local payments for the Power III project have been resolved. Important that this keeps on schedule.

Falklands

6. Grateful for Sudanese support during Falklands conflict and for helpful Sudanese abstention over Argentine resolution at the UN General Assembly. Appreciate President's personal support.

7. Hope Sudan will continue to support us in other international fora, for example within the Non-Aligned Movement.

8. Our view on negotiations has not altered.

Internal Situation in Sudan

9. Consultative Group meeting in Paris appears to have gone well. Prospects for the IMF Standby arrangement seem good. The difficult economic measures appear to have been imposed without too much trouble. President's action to stabilise economy welcome.

10. Political timetable for 1983? SSU Congress.
Presidential elections (March?)

Foreign Affairs

ARAB/ISRAEL

11. Arab League Delegations visit. Much regretted misunderstandings that arose last November. Attached importance to visit by the Delegation. When problem arose at last moment, looked urgently for a mutually acceptable basis. Since worked hard with Moroccans to find alternative solution.

12. Hope/^{/Glad} that [as Moroccans have announced] visit now going ahead on 7-8 February. Look forward to thorough discussion with full Delegation including Palestinian representative. Important to direct energies to making real progress towards peace.

13. Policy towards PLO. No step backwards. Committed to Palestinian self-determination and PLO association with negotiations. Well-established policy that senior ministerial contacts with PLO only useful if PLO prepared to take crucial step forward by accepting Israel's rights and rejecting terrorism. Our policy constructive: and well-known to Arab side before visit.

14. Prospects for peace improved following Reagan and Fez. But time short. Have pressed US to take practical step to follow up Reagan's call for settlements freeze. In Arabs' own interests to build on current US interest in solving

Palestinian problem. Jordan/PLO discussions a welcome attempt to work out realistic negotiating position. Deserve support from other Arabs.

15. PLO attitudes. Outcome of PNC meeting could be decisive. Impressions of attitudes within PLO? What are views of PLO fighters in Sudan?

ETHIOPIA

16. How do you interpret developments in Ethiopia? Is Mengistu ready for more constructive relationship with neighbours, including Sudan? Any signs of readiness to negotiate with Eritrean secessionist movement?

17. What are present roles of: Soviet Union; Libya?

18. Are other Arab countries, eg Egypt, Saudi Arabia, helping reduce tension? Anything we can do to help?

LIBYA

19. How is Qadhafi likely to react now that the OAU Chairmanship appears to have eluded him? Risk of renewed interference in Chad?

20. Threat of Libyan-backed subversion in Sudan?

EGYPT

21. Significance of recently signed integration agreement with Egypt.

IRAQ

22. Interested to hear account of your policy towards Iraq. (Recent decision to send troops.)

CALL BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI OF SUDAN: 24 JANUARY

ESSENTIAL FACTS

NIMEIRI'S VISIT TO LONDON

1. Nimeiri suffered a mild stroke in December, has been to United States for medical treatment (he has hypertension) and has been pronounced fit. This visit to Britain (15-28 January) is primarily to rest before embarking on a busy year which will include a congress of the ruling SSU party and a presidential election in which he is the sole candidate. Sudan's economic problems will be very much on the President's mind.

ANGLO-SUDANESE RELATIONS

2. Sudan was under British administration from 1898 to 1956 and her ties with Britain remain strong and friendly. In addition to our civil aid (£40m in 1982/3) Sudan also receives significant military assistance through the British Army Training Team and courses in Britain. The Sudanese are in deep trouble financially and look to us for both political and economic help, with the IMF, the Paris Club and in arranging additional emergency aid. President Nimeiri's regime is friendly and pro-Western, taking a moderate line on the Middle East conflict and a constructive line on African problems. There is a continual flow of Sudanese Ministers, officials and businessmen visiting London. Mr Hurd visited Sudan in December 1981. Our Ambassador has good access to the President.

3. The Sudanese have been helpful throughout the Falklands conflict. They supported a settlement within the context of Security Council Resolution 502. The President expressed in private his full support for the UK. Sudan abstained on the Argentine resolution at the General Assembly.

BILATERAL PROBLEMS

4. Two minor irritants:-

a) Five British firms are owed a total £1.1m in compensation for nationalisation of their property in Sudan in 1970. Despite Sudanese promises little progress has been made. In the past few days, perhaps because of Nimeiri's visit, the Finance Ministry have told our Ambassador that Sudanese intend to pay compensation in instalments of £200,000 starting after the receipt of the IMF tranche due in February and at quarterly intervals thereafter. We hope Sudanese will hold to this. Amount is small but it means a great deal to the vociferous firms involved.

b) Sudanese have been slow with their local payments on the Power III electricity project to which majority of British aid to Sudan is committed. Again in the past few days the Sudanese have brought payments up to date and have set up a committee to examine ways of expediting payments in future. This is encouraging and we hope the Sudanese will be able to ensure that late local payments do not hinder future work. Complaints are not one sided however; the performance of the main British contractor, Northern Electrical Industries, was poor at initial stages and NEI must bear some responsibility for delays.

INTERNAL SITUATION IN SUDAN

Economic:

5. Sudan is the largest country in Africa (1 million square miles) and one of the poorest (GDP/capita 1980 = \$470). Under populated (19.3 million in 1981) and brain-drained, Sudan is a classic victim of the oil crisis; 25% of imports and 70% of export earnings go on oil. Indigenous oil deposits hold out some hope for the future and a major pipeline is planned, but production will not begin for several years. Sudan faces a balance of payments and debt servicing crisis. An IMF standby arrangement broke down in 1982, a new arrangement is under discussion. Fund is expected to approve \$38 million in February with \$170 million to follow. Sudanese have already imposed some

severe measures (50% devaluation, 70% increase in petrol prices) to meet IMF demands.

6. Rescheduling of Sudan's external debt of \$8 billion and generous assistance from the aid community required. At a Consultative Meeting of aid donors in Paris 12-14 January delegations indicated assistance in 1983 of \$750 million. UK pledged additional £7 million of balance of payments support (conditional on agreement with the IMF and on Paris Club and other creditors reaching satisfactory rescheduling of Sudan's debts)

7. Sudan is facing a growing problem with refugees from Ethiopia, Uganda and Chad who have placed an additional burden on the economy. There are currently 500,000 refugees in the country. UK has recently given additional \$800,000 in aid for refugees.

Political:

8. Present government came to power in 1969 as a result of a virtually bloodless coup d'etat. Authority is vested in an Executive President, Nimeiri, elected in 1971 and was the only candidate (due for re-election in 1983). Officially there is a single party, the Sudanese Socialist Union, which cuts deliberately across regional and sectarian loyalties, which are still strong, and which form the basis for the main opposition groups.

9. Nimeiri's chief worry is the economy. He had little option but to impose the severe IMF conditions but appears to have got away with it. Ultimately Nimeiri has to rely on the Army but the loyalty of the armed forces is in doubt. However, there is still no focus for serious political opposition. Libyan backed subversion is continuing but is at a low ebb. The South is at least temporarily quiescent and the Sudanese people seem preoccupied with the drudgery of merely surviving.

FOREIGN POLICY

10. Sudan's foreign policy strives to maintain a balance between Egypt, her military guarantor against threat from

Ethiopia and Libya, and the oil rich states on whom she relies for economic support. She has leaned closer to the West since the abortive Communist coup of 1971 and the consequent increase in economic dependence on western aid and finance. Sudan veered close to Egypt in the wake of the Libyan invasion of Chad in 1980 and an integration agreement was signed by Nimeiri and Mubarak in September 1982. United States' involvement has increased dramatically, particularly since the assassination of President Sadat. Relations with Libya are severely strained and the threat of Libyan backed subversion remains. Sudan boycotted the two abortive attempts to hold an OAU summit in Tripoli because of her bad relations with Qadhafi.

11. Relations with Ethiopia are once again going downhill. Sudanese are suspicious of tripartite pact signed August 1981 (Libya, Ethiopia, PDRY). Sudan has long provided asylum for Eritrean secessionists. This has encouraged Ethiopia to provide help for Southern Sudanese opposed to Nimeiri. Mengistu, closely aligned to Moscow, has consolidated his hold on power in Ethiopia. Some signs that he wishes to improve relations with the west but his actions, eg attacks on Somali villages make this difficult. We believe Sudan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia incline to the view that continuation of secessionist war in Eritrea and Somali claims to the Ogaden help perpetuate the Russian presence in Ethiopia. They may therefore be encouraging both the Eritreans and Somalis to seek negotiated solutions to their problems.

12. Nimeiri announced on 4 October a decision to send Sudanese troops to Iraq. The wheel has turned full circle since Sudan and Iraq severed diplomatic relations in April 1979. Nimeiri's gesture appears to have been made without much thought. The decision is unpopular within the Sudanese armed forces and there are already rumours of Sudanese casualties on the Iranian front.

13. Sudan normally takes little part in the search for an Arab/Israel solution. But recently President Nimeiri

has played up his attachment to the Palestinian cause. He was the first Arab leader to offer refuge to PLO fighters from Beirut, and has agreed to re-open the PLO office in Khartoum. There are now some 500 PLO fighters in the Sudan. Arafat has paid a well-publicised visit to them, and publicly expressed his gratitude to Nimeiri. But the Sudanese have complained about the failure of the PLO to pay the costs of maintaining those PLO fighters in Sudan.

14. The Sudanese press reacted sharply to the postponement of the Arab League Delegation's visit to London. But they refrained from raising either this issue or the cancellation of the Secretary of State's visit to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf with the Ambassador in Khartoum. It is most unlikely that Sudan would take action against us in the trade field on their own initiative. They are very conscious of British aid and in view of the accumulation of economic debts and transfer demands have little economic leverage. But if no solution to the Arab League visit is found and a call for a trade boycott against Britain gathered momentum, the Sudanese would find it difficult to avoid joining in. President Nimeiri will, therefore, be particularly interested in where negotiations stand with the Moroccans on reinstatement of the visit, particularly the question of Palestinian representation.

Near East and North Africa Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
20 January 1983

SUDAN FACT SHEET

TITLE	Democratic Republic of Sudan
CAPITAL	Khartoum
AREA	2,506,000 sq kms
POPULATION	19.3 m (1981)
GROWTH RATE	% pa 1970-79 2.7%
GNP	\$8,640 million
GNP/CAPITA	\$470 (1980)
TOTAL ARMED FORCES	71,000 (1981)
TOTAL MILITARY EXPENDITURE	\$245 m (1981)
TOTAL EXPORTS	\$381.6 m (1981/2)
TOTAL IMPORTS	\$1,822 m (1981/2)
UK EXPORTS TO	£118.6 m (1981) (1st 10 months 1982 - £104.8 m)
UK IMPORTS FROM	£6 m (1981) (1st 10 months 1982 - £9 m)
UK AID FRAMEWORK	1982/3 £40 m (ODA commitment of £74 m to Power III electricity project, due completion 1984)
RELATIONS WITH IMF	Quota SDR 132 million (new standby arrangement under discussion)

MEMBERSHIP OF PRINCIPAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:

UN
NAM
G77
OAU
Arab League

GAAFAR MOHAMMED NIMEIRI

President of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, Supreme Commander and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation.

Born 1930 at Wad Nubawi, Omdurman, of an Ansar family from Dongola. He attended school in Wad Medani and Hantoub.

He graduated from the Sudan Military College in 1952 with the rank of Second Lieutenant, and was posted to Darfur. In 1957 he was retired from the Army on suspicion of involvement in plots against the Government. He was reinstated in 1959 and posted to Southern Command where he saw action against Southern Rebels. In 1963 he was sent to West Germany for a training course and by 1964, as Commander of First Battalion, Khartoum Garrison, he was one of several officers arrested for a short time by General Abboud's regime, which was ousted shortly afterwards.

His obvious qualities of leadership marked him out for further Staff College training and he was sent to Fort Leavenworth, USA, in August 1965. On his return to the Sudan he was appointed Acting Commander of Eastern Command in November 1966. The next month he was arrested for involvement in an abortive coup. He was reinstated in January 1967 to command the Infantry Training School at Gebeit though his automatic promotion was blocked because of his record of intrigue and conspiracy and he remained until the Revolution of May 1969 a Colonel.

In his thirteen years in power he has made a number of U-turns taking the Sudan from extreme Arab nationalism and friendship with the Communist countries to a policy of attracting petro-dollars and Western technology for his grandiose development plans. He replaced his military Command Council in 1971 with a quasi-civilian presidential system and a one party organisation, the Sudanese Socialist Union, through which he has tried unsuccessfully to encourage popular participation in government. He was elected President in 1971 and re-elected for a further six year term in February 1977. In January 1980 he chose to put his Presidency of the SSU to the test of elections before they were due: in the end no-one stood against him and the result was an outstanding affirmative vote.

He has survived several attempts to unseat him, the most serious being in July 1971 (by the Communists) and in July 1976 (by the National Front led by Sadiq El Mahdi (qv) and Sherif Hussein El Hindi). In January 1982 he only survived amidst severe criticism from his political and military leaders by dint of courageous bluff.

His worse blot was the massacre of the Ansar on Abba Island in 1970. His greatest political achievement was the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972 bringing to an end the 17 year old rebellion in the South.

He likes to regard himself as an African and Arab statesman and a bridge between the two worlds. He was proud of his Chairmanship of the OAU in 1978/79, and has offered himself as a mediator in various African disputes, in particular the Eritrean issue where he likes to quote the example of Southern Sudan. An advocate of regional groupings in Africa.

In Arab affairs he was careful to distance himself somewhat from Camp David to preserve the difficult balance between Egypt, his military guarantor, and Saudi Arabia, his potential financial guarantor. His paranoid hate of Qadhafi was heightened by the Libyan invasion of Chad in December 1980 which threw him into the arms of Sadat, and, on the latter's assassination, the US. Since January 1981 links with Egypt under a policy of "integration" have multiplied.

Internally, Nimeiri realised after the 1976 coup attempt that he had to deal with his exiled opponents and in 1977 began a policy of National Reconciliation with opposition groups which has attracted the Muslim Brothers into a tactical alliance, enmeshed the Ansar in fruitless dialogue, but not brought home the UNUP exiles. The policy ran out of steam in summer 1981.

The concentration of power in Nimeiri's hands, and his reliance on the Army have become increasingly blatant. He has appointed weak and inefficient Ministers without their own political standing, and been assiduous in not allowing rivals to arise, sacking Vice-Presidents when necessary. The inadequacies of the regime, especially in economic policy, have become increasingly obvious, corruption has multiplied, and Nimeiri's personal popularity and prestige has waned.

Nimeiri is very much a soldier: disciplined, courageous of average intelligence, strong physically and with a streak of ruthlessness. He is very hardworking despite periodic anxiety over his health (he suffers from high blood pressure).

He has not been very successful in his attempt to delegate authority. He enjoys power and is determined to keep it despite his claims that he wants to stand down in 1983. Essentially a patriot, he believes that he knows what is good for the Sudan and is best qualified to provide it. Unsophisticated and inexperienced in politics when he came to power, he has since developed considerable political skill. He built up his public image by touring the country, making numerous speeches and mixing with the people, and inspiring respect rather than affection. However he has developed a certain "charisma" by dint of being in office so long and he stands head and shoulders above those around him. He probably lacks deep political convictions, though he has increasingly strong religious ones. He has been disillusioned by his experience of communism and appears to have decided that a moderately pro-Western policy is the Sudan's best bet.

He is married but has no children, a fact which causes him considerable disappointment. He and his wife have visited a gynaecologist in the United Kingdom more than once to seek medical help over the problem, and more recently he has been secretly to the United States for the same purpose. In August 1980 he had an operation in the US to remove a blood clot. He was advised to further reduce his working hours after a collapse in September 1980, but following a further check-up in December 1980 his health has improved and he has taken back more presidential functions, although he is not, and probably never will be, quite the man he was; he tires easily, and becomes somewhat incoherent and slurred in speech.

NASR EL DIN MUSTAFA

Ambassador to London.

Born October 1930 in Omdurman. Educated at Wadi Seidna Secondary School and the Faculty of Engineering, University of Khartoum, and London University (BSc in Civil Engineering, 1956). In 1958 he was sent on a study course to the United Kingdom and became a member of the British Civil Engineers' Association.

Served with various sections of Sudan Railways after which appointed Resident Engineer in Port Sudan and then Chief Harbour Engineer. In April 1968 he helped in the establishment of the Sudanese Estate Bank. In June 1969 he was seconded for work with the Armed Forces to carry out its major engineering projects: the naval base and air defence bases. Granted the rank of Brigadier in June 1971 and commissioned to establish the military works of which he was in charge until November 1973. Member of the Board of Directors of Sudan Railways since its establishment in August 1973, and was responsible for the establishment of the Sea Ports Board. Promoted to Major-General in December 1974. Appointed Minister of State for Planning in February 1976 and Chairman of the Council of Technological Colleges in March 1976, and Minister of National Planning in September 1977. Not reappointed in the Cabinet reshuffle of November 1981. Ambassador in London from April 1982.

A pleasant man but a weak Minister who was criticised for having allowed his Ministry to become largely subordinate to the Ministry of Finance.

Married with five children.

11.15 Sunday

①



Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 January 1983

It is difficult to turn him down. You cannot see him this week. Can you see him at 11.15 on Sunday (we are keeping the whole afternoon free for you French special)?

A-J-C. 12. 1

Dear Jdm,

President Nimeiri of Sudan

President Nimeiri of Sudan arrived in London on 15 January for a short visit (perhaps 10 days). Although the President is here privately (he has come from Washington where he has been receiving medical treatment and is hoping to rest) he would very much like to see the Prime Minister, as well as Mr Pym.

Our relations with the Sudan are excellent; we have close military, aid and commercial ties with the country. In recent years the Nimeiri regime has been consistently friendly towards the UK and helpful to us over a number of international issues, most recently over the Falklands. Although weakened by internal economic problems, Sudan is likely to remain an important pro-western influence in the Horn of Africa and to a lesser extent within the Middle East, and a counter to the expansion of Soviet influence through Libya and Ethiopia. President Nimeiri merits our attention on his own account because of his moderate and statesmanlike stance on many African issues. He has consistently advocated the peaceful settlement of African disputes, for example in Chad, the Western Sahara, the Ogaden and Eritrea. He represents a moderate voice in the Arab world.

Mr Pym, therefore, hopes that the Prime Minister will agree to offer President Nimeiri a 45 minute call in the course of this week.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T157/80



10 DOWNING STREET

SUBJECT
THE PRIME MINISTER

1 August 1980

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to thank you for the two splendid gifts of carved ivory which your Ambassador here has been kind enough to forward to me on your behalf. It was a most generous gesture.

I greatly enjoyed our conversation and share your hope that an opportunity will present itself for further discussions. I look forward with much pleasure to taking up your invitation to pay a visit to the Sudan - though it may I fear be some little time before this proves possible.

Yours sincerely,

MT

His Excellency Sayed Gaafar Mohammed Nimeiri



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 August 1980

I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from the Sudanese Ambassador and a copy of the consequent letter from the Prime Minister to President Nimeiri. I should be grateful if you could arrange for the latter to be delivered in Khartoum. You will note that President Nimeiri has extended an invitation to the Prime Minister to visit the Sudan and that the Prime Minister has accepted in principle.

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

HS



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 August 1980

I am replying on the Prime Minister's behalf to your letter to her of 31 July. The Prime Minister has written to President Nimeiri thanking him for his gifts. I enclose a copy of the Prime Minister's letter.

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

His Excellency Sayed Amir El-Sawi

EMBASSY
OF
THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN
ST. JAMES'S
LONDON, S.W. 1.



سفارة
جمهورية السودان الديمقراطية
لندن

31st July, 1980

Madame Prime Minister,

Now that the private visit of His Excellency The President of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan has come to an end, my President Gaafar Mohamed Nimeiri, has requested me to extend to you personally his sincere thanks and appreciation for all the facilities and assistance kindly provided to him by Her Majesty's Government which made his brief stay in your great city for convalescence, both most comfortable and memorable.

His Excellency cherished the opportunity of meeting you and enjoyed the fruitful discussions you had together and he looks forward to a more opportune time to have more talks and wider discussions. His Excellency, the President, also requested me to extend an invitation to you to visit the Sudan at any future date convenient.

His Excellency, the President, would very much appreciate your acceptance of the herewith forwarded token souvenir of pure Sudanese handcraft as a remembrance of his visit.

In conclusion I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you the assurance of my highest consideration.

Amir El Sawi

Amir El Sawi,
Ambassador.

The Prime Minister,
10, Downing Street,
London SW1.

CONFIDENTIAL



File Sudan MS
Copy to
Master Set

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

28 July 1980

Dear Paul,

Call by President Nimeiri

President Nimeiri of Sudan called on the Prime Minister on Friday 25 July. He was accompanied by the Sudanese Ambassador. Mr. John Moberley was also present.

After an exchange of courtesies, President Nimeiri expressed gratification about the close relations between Sudan and the United Kingdom. He said that he was especially pleased about the excellent co-operation inside Sudan. His people would remember for a long time the assistance given to them by HMG, particularly over the Power III project. The Sudanese Government were the more grateful in that they were well aware of the cuts taking place in Britain's aid programme as a whole. The Sudanese Government intended to go on giving priority to the development of the country. They were not interested in building up a large army or in threatening their neighbours. They wished to improve the standard of living and political liberties of the people. Given its long history of involvement in the Sudan, Britain was best placed to assist in this programme. The Prime Minister said that she was delighted at what President Nimeiri had said. She wished that more countries would set themselves similar priorities.

The Prime Minister asked President Nimeiri for his assessment of the situation in Ethiopia. President Nimeiri said that Ethiopia could be a good friend of Sudan. The present government in Addis Ababa were, of course, Marxists. But they might well become nationalists rather than Marxists and detach themselves from Moscow. General Mengistu recently visited Khartoum. President Nimeiri had succeeded in persuading him that the position of the Sudan was different from that of Somalia. Sudan did not wish to interfere in Ethiopia. They wanted the regime in Addis Ababa to be secure and they wanted to see the Eritrean problem resolved peacefully. It was essential that Ethiopia and the Sudan should learn to live together. They had a common border of considerable length. Six or eight tribes lived across it.

The Prime Minister asked whether General Mengistu was trying to detach himself from Moscow. President Nimeiri said that that was his impression. General Mengistu had invited him to come to Addis Ababa in November. This was evidence of the rapid improvement

/in

CONFIDENTIAL

In relations between the two countries: indeed General Mengistu had originally intended to invite him in September but this had proved impossible because of a clash of dates with a visit by the President of Hungary. President Nimeiri had not yet replied to the Ethiopian invitation but intended to accept as soon as he had returned to Khartoum. President Nimeiri said that he had advised General Mengistu that he should get round a table with the Eritreans and listen to their views. General Mengistu had said that he wanted the Eritreans to help build the new Ethiopia. Once the process of construction had been completed, the Eritreans would be offered the choice of autonomy or independence. But at present Ethiopia was too poor to let the Eritreans go.

As regards the quarrel with Somalia, President Nimeiri said that he thought both the Ethiopians and the Somalis wanted Sudanese help in finding a solution. He was disposed to try to be of assistance. The difficulty was that, as a result, the Ethiopians suspected Sudan of backing the Somalis while the Somalis suspected the Sudan of abandoning them. He was advising the Somalis that there was no chance of their securing the transfer of the Ogaden. All that would be negotiable would be minor adjustments in the border. President Nimeiri said that he thought Ethiopia would sooner or later listen to his advice on both problems. The country was in a very bad way. It was bankrupt and running out of food. Ethiopian refugees who had been given land in the Sudan were now sending food back into Ethiopia.

Turning to Uganda, President Nimeiri said that the problem there was being created by Tanzania. The Tanzanians had done well in getting rid of Amin but now they seemed tempted to try to impose Mr. Obote on the country. This would not be helpful. It had been agreed in Mombasa that there should be democratic elections in Uganda. But after the meeting in Mombasa, President Nyerere had changed his mind and had adopted the line that no elections could take place in Uganda until the Tanzanian army had been withdrawn and that the army could not be withdrawn until the Ugandans requested this. He was now engaged in placing supporters of Mr. Obote in positions of power. They would not of course request withdrawal. President Nyerere was now criticising both the Sudan and Kenya for their policies towards Uganda. The Sudan, like Kenya had a lot of Amin's men on their territory. So far they had forbidden them to return to Uganda and had tried to deprive them of their arms. But there was a temptation in present circumstances to allow them to return.

President Nimeiri said that if either Mr. Binaisa or Mr. Lule were to run in a campaign against Mr. Obote they would win. They would secure the support of the Baganda tribe. The other tribes were split. President Nyerere was well aware of this. President Nimeiri said that he intended to speak to President Nyerere soon after his return. Given Uganda's strategic position, it was essential to avoid civil war there. If a fire started in Uganda it could well spread to the neighbouring countries.

In a brief discussion of the position of Mr. Binaisa, President Nimeiri said that he had talked to the Chairman of the Uganda Military Committee in Arusha. The Ugandan had said that the Military Committee had charges against Mr. Binaisa. He had taken money from Ugandan banks. President Nimeiri had said that he was

/prepared

prepared to give Mr. Binaisa refuge and that he would ensure that Mr. Binaisa did not work against Uganda. The matter rested there for the moment.

Referring to the situation in Chad, President Nimeiri said that neither side could win the civil war there. The role of the Libyans had been thoroughly irresponsible. They had been supplying large numbers of automatic weapons to their supporters. Given the presence of a number of tribes straddling the border, there was a constant danger that the war might spread into Sudan. Unfortunately the Libyans had an interest in perpetuating the conflict.

After a brief exchange about the OAU Summit, the Prime Minister asked President Nimeiri how he saw the situation in the Middle East. She said that clearly no major advance was going to be made before the US elections. The Camp David negotiations seemed to have run into the sand. President Nimeiri said that he had talked to President Carter about the Middle East during his recent visit to Washington. President Carter was anxious that the Camp David process should continue. He had said that Israel would have to be more flexible but that this was not the right time to talk about Jerusalem. The Prime Minister commented that President Sadat had been very courageous and that one might have expected Mr. Begin to try to be of more help to him. President Nimeiri said the one oasis of hope in the world at present seemed to be Europe. The European Governments could play a useful role in the Middle East, and elsewhere, between Moscow and Washington. The Prime Minister said that she thought the OAU could also play a useful role in some areas. President Nimeiri acknowledged this but said that the OAU was subject to many outside influences. Some of its members were completely under Soviet influence. The Prime Minister said that she had the impression that more and more states wanted to shake off Soviet influence. The price of Soviet assistance was Soviet control and the disadvantages of this were becoming more widely recognised. Moreover the Soviet Union only gave arms whereas Western governments gave practical assistance. President Nimeiri, agreeing, asked about Zimbabwe. The Prime Minister said that we were watching developments there anxiously. There were bound to be problems but we hoped that the situation would work out satisfactorily.

John Lever

Nicholas Alexander

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

AC/SED

17th July 1980

Prime Minister .

D. Wolfson Esq.
10 Downing Street
London
SW1

Dear Mr. Wolfson

On 17th June 1979 we received a letter of intent from the Sudanese Government signed by H.E. Dr. B.E.M. Idris, Minister for the Presidency, for a study for the Upper Atbara project worth over £5 million. This study covers the irrigation of the Upper Atbara region and would involve a sugar complex, roads, dams, bridges etc. - a contract worth £2 billion.

We have organised the study finance from Arab sources and everything has been in order to proceed for 18 months. When I asked the Arab financier why no decision had been reached, he remarked that the difficulty was that Sudanese ministers are usually at variance with one another which precludes decisions being taken. A word from Mrs. Thatcher or a minister to President Numeiri would be very helpful now.

No other British firms were involved in the study but we may well involve such when we get the main contract.

Yours sincerely

Ambrose Congreve

Ambrose Congreve

The study contract is not very large (& it must be doubtful whether the Sudanese Govt will be able to raise the money for the main project). It is not the sort of undertaking for which a Prime Ministerial intervention would usually be indicated: action by the Ambassador in Khartoum would be better. However there is no reason of principle why you should not, if you feel like doing so, mention the matter to President Nimeiri.

And - 24/7

Sudan.



10 DOWNING STREET

Note for the file.

P.M.'s talks with Pres.
NIMEIRI cancelled: Nimeiri
ill.

17. 7. 80.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15/14 July 1980

Dear Michael,

President Nimeiri of the Sudan

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

We have our doubts about this assessment, since it is clearly in Ethiopia's interests to give exactly this impression if they are ever to detach the Sudanese from their support for the Eritreans. Nevertheless, the Sudanese have had recent high level contacts with the Ethiopians and are in a good position to judge their attitudes. The Prime Minister might ask President Nimeiri for his assessment,

Since President Nimeiri will be calling at teatime, the Prime Minister may wish to be reminded that President Nimeiri is likely to be observing Ramadhan at the time. Muslims are obliged during Ramadhan not to eat, drink or smoke between sunrise and sunset or to keep company with those who do. There is a possibility however that the President may be exempted from fasting on medical grounds (he has high blood pressure). If this is the case we will inform you.

G G H Walden

(G G H Walden)

M O'D B Alexander Esq

CALL BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI OF SUDAN

Points to Make

Bilateral Relations

1. Glad to be able to contribute £61 million towards Power III Project and £850,000 for refugee relief in the Sudan. Mr Marten grateful for warm reception in Khartoum at recent refugee Conference. Was Conference a success?

Arab/Israel

2. Nine intend to explore views of all concerned. Wish to build on achievement of Camp David, not to undermine it.

3. Will keep up pressure on Israel over settlements, but Arabs must help by counselling PLO to be flexible. Without indication of Palestinian readiness to coexist with Israel, further progress difficult.

Afghanistan

4. Recognise Islamic countries are in forefront of search for solution. Our role to lend discreet support. Welcome President's view on ways pressure on the Russians can be kept up.

Africa

5. How are relations with Ethiopia developing? Does the President believe Ethiopians will compromise over Eritrea? Will Sudan continue support for Eritreans till they do?

6. UK shares Sudanese concern to see stable government and internal security restored in Uganda through free and fair elections. We will consider carefully any request from Military Commission through Commonwealth Secretariat for observers. Concerned at apparent worsening of relations between Kenya/Sudan and Uganda/Tanzania. Is there any prospect of revival of coordinated approach to Uganda's problems?

7. Divisions of opinion within OAU over Western Sahara dispute worrying. Do Sudanese see any prospects for a negotiated settlement?

ESSENTIAL FACTSBilateral Relations

1. Our relations with the Sudan are in excellent shape, largely due to our decision to honour a commitment to help finance a major project (Power III) to increase the supply of electricity to the three towns of the capital and surrounding agricultural areas. Nimeiri has described our relations as a source of pride and affection. We remain the Sudan's main supplier and provide training for her armed forces both in the UK and through a British Army Training Team in Khartoum. She has become the largest recipient of UK aid outside the Commonwealth.

2. Mr Marten visited Khartoum in June to attend a Sudan Government refugee conference, to make a UK pledge of £850,000 for refugee relief in the Sudan and to sign the Power III agreement. The measure of Sudanese gratitude both for our offer of help with their refugees (more than 500,000 mostly Eritreans) and for the Minister's attendance at the Conference was shown by the reception given him. He was received by Nimeiri and four Ministers and no less than ten Cabinet Ministers attended a dinner given in his honour by our Ambassador.

Arab/Israel

3. The split in the Arab world over the Egypt-Israel peace treaty has left Sudan in a dangerously exposed position in the middle. Nimeiri wishes to maintain good relations simultaneously with Egypt, to whom he looks for military and political support and with whom his country has close historical ties; and with the oil-rich Gulf States, who could provide considerable aid to Sudan's ailing economy. He also needs to defuse the hostility of the radical Arabs who support those within Sudan who could undermine his regime. The difficulty of maintaining a balancing act between these rival forces explains Nimeiri's eclectic foreign policy. Although initial Sudanese support for Camp David has cooled considerably, the Sudan has refused to join in Arab measures aimed at isolating Egypt and bilateral contacts continue.

4. Sudanese reaction to the Venice Declaration has been reasonably welcoming. They have characterised it as a compromise but welcomed

/the

the prospect of the Europeans as a community making their influence felt in the area. They accept the importance we attach to trying to build on Camp David and to keeping discussions going during the hiatus created by the US elections.

Afghanistan and Africa

5. In recent years the Nimeiri regime has been consistently friendly towards the West and helpful to us over such issues as Rhodesia (when Nimeiri was OAU Chairman in 1978), and more recently in her response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Without taking the lead she has supported strong condemnation of Soviet action by the Islamic conference. Nimeiri has taken a consistently moderate and statesmanlike stance on many African issues. Since achieving a peaceful settlement of the Sudan's longstanding (North v South) Civil War in 1972 he has consistently advocated the peaceful settlement of other African disputes for example in Rhodesia, Chad, the Western Sahara, the Ogaden and Eritrea and Uganda.

6. A personal meeting with Mengistu at Freetown in July 1979 failed to improve relations with Ethiopia, but since then there have been a number of bilateral meetings culminating in a visit by Mengistu to Khartoum in May 1980. These exchanges appear to have gone well and a number of border problems have been settled, but there has been little substantive discussion of the one major issue between the two sides; Eritrea. Nimeiri is thought to have offered his good offices as a mediator to Mengistu during their recent meeting and recommended to him a solution over Eritrea similar to that achieved in the Sudan, where the Southern region has a large measure of autonomy. But we fear that Mengistu may be acting on Russian instructions in an attempt to undermine Sudanese assistance to Eritrean liberation groups, and that he has no intention of granting any measure of self rule to Eritrea.

7. Sudan is following events in Uganda with close interest. The Sudanese want stability restored and elections leading to a civilian leadership free of military or external domination. After the

/6 June

6 June summit in Tanzania between Nyerere, Numeiri and Muwanga of the Military Commission, Numeiri briefed President Moi of Kenya (who had belatedly declined to attend). Both Kenya and Sudan have called for the withdrawal of the (approximately 13,000) Tanzanian troops in Uganda so that elections can be held free of pressure. Both fear that Nyerere intends to install Obote as President by foul means if necessary, but Obote is perhaps doing less well in electioneering than expected. The risk of civil disorder remains whether or not Obote wins or elections are free and fair.

8. The recent OAU summit in Freetown was unable to decide on the admission to the Organisation on the Polisario Front's Sahara Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) as the rightful government of the Western Sahara which is currently occupied by Moroccan troops and claimed by King Hassan as part of Morocco. The summit referred the dispute back to the Committee of Five Heads of State under President Stevens chairmanship with instructions to report back in three months time on the prospects for a compromise solution. The Committee of Five (Nigeria, Tanzania, Mali, Ivory Coast and Guinea was first set up to consider the problem under President Nimeiri's chairmanship (as the then OAU chairman) at the 1978 OAU Summit. Its report, discussed at a special OAU Conference at Monrovia in December 1979, recommended a referendum for the territory. This was unacceptable to the Moroccans who claim that the wishes of the people were ascertained in 1976 through a non-elective consultative body set up by the Spanish during the colonial period. The chances of the Committee achieving a compromise solution by October, therefore, appear remote.

9. We recognise neither Moroccan nor Polisario claims to the territory and are neutral on the dispute. But we would welcome a negotiated settlement because the fighting threatens stability in the area, provides an opportunity for Libyan troublemaking and complicates western relations with Morocco and Algeria (the Polisario Front's main diplomatic supporters).

GAAFAR MOHAMMED NIMEIRI

President of the Republic.

Born 1930 at Wad Nubawi, Omdurman, of an Ansar family. He attended school in Wad Medani and Hantoub. He graduated from the Sudan Military College in 1952 with the rank of Second Lieutenant, and was posted to Darfur. In 1963 he was sent to West Germany for a training course and by 1964, as Commander of First Battalion, Khartoum Garrison, he was one of several officers arrested for a short time by General Abboud's regime, which was ousted shortly afterwards.

His obvious qualities of leadership marked him out for further Staff College training and he was sent to Fort Leavenworth, USA, in August 1965. On his return to the Sudan he was appointed Acting Commander of Eastern Command in November 1966. The next month he was arrested for involvement in an abortive coup. He was reinstated in January 1967, though his automatic promotion was blocked and he remained until the Revolution of May 1969 a Colonel.

In his ten years in power he has made a number of U-turns taking the Sudan from extreme Arab nationalism and friendship with the Communist countries to a policy of attracting petrodollars and Western technology for his development plans. He replaced his military Command Council in 1971 with a quasi-civilian presidential system and a one party organisation, the Sudanese Socialist Union, through which he has tried not very successfully to encourage popular participation in government. He was elected President in 1971 and re-elected for a further six years term in 1977. He has survived several attempts to unseat him, the most serious being in July 1971 (by the Communists) and in July 1976 (by the National Front led by Sadiq el Mahdi and Sherif Hussein el Hindi). His greatest political achievement was the Addis Ababa agreement in 1972 bringing to an end the 17 year old rebellion in the South. He regards himself as an African as well as an Arab statesman and has of late been leading the field in denouncing Soviet penetration in Africa. In Arab affairs he has been on close personal terms with President Sadat of Egypt although these have been strained by recent Sudanese coolness on Camp David. At home he has tried to mend his fences with his former enemies, notably the Ansar and Sadiq el Mahdi. In government he has tried to stamp out corruption and bring greater efficiency; but the results have been disappointing.

Nimeiri is very much a soldier: disciplined, courageous, of average intelligence, strong physically and with a streak of ruthlessness. He is very hardworking despite periodic anxiety over his health (he suffers from high blood pressure). He has not been very successful in his attempt to delegate authority. He enjoys power and is determined to keep it.

Essentially a patriot, he believes that he knows what is good for the Sudan and is best qualified to provide it. Unsophisticated and inexperienced in politics when he came to power, he has since developed considerable political skill. He has built up his public image by touring the country, making numerous speeches and mixing with the people. He probably lacks deep convictions, though he has increasingly strong religious ones. He has been disillusioned by his experience of communism and appears to have decided that a moderately pro-Western policy is the Sudan's best bet. He inspires respect rather than affection. However, he has developed a certain 'charisma' by dint of being in office so long and he stands head and shoulders above those around him.

POST OFFICE

