

WJK/763/13

VFDW G 238/12

DD 130230Z DELHI

OO WARSAW

OO JEDDA

OO RIYADH

GRS 290

CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO 121830Z APR 85

TO IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI

TELEGRAM NUMBER 460 OF 12 APRIL

AND TO IMMEDIATE WARSAW (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY)

INFO IMMEDIATE JEDDA, RIYADH

FOLLOWING FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY TO PRIME MINISTER

MIPT: SUDAN

1. THE ARMY'S DECISION TO TAKE CONTROL ON 6 APRIL WAS APPARENTLY AN UNPREMEDITATED RESPONSE TO GROWING CHAOS. GENERAL SOHAR EL DAHAB APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND MAY HAVE ACTED UNDER PRESSURE FROM SENIOR COLLEAGUES. POWER IS NOW VESTED IN A TRANSITIONAL MILITARY COUNCIL WITH EL DAHAB AS PRESIDENT. CIVILIANS WERE DISAPPOINTED BY THIS BUT SEEM TO BE REASSURED BY THE ARMY'S STATEMENT OF INTENTION TO FORM A LARGELY CIVILIAN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. THERE ARE SIGNS THAT JUNIOR OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT THE GENERALS WERE TOO CLOSE TO NIMEIRI AND ARE TOO SLOW TO CHANGE. AN UNHELPFUL REACTION BY SOUTHERN REBEL LEADER GARANG MAY STEM FROM THE FEAR THAT HE WAS BEING SIDESTEPED BY THE COUP. THE SITUATION REMAINS PRECARIOUS. THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGN OF CHANGE IN SUDAN'S PRO-WESTERN AND MODERATE ARAB ORIENTATION. EL DAHAB MADE EARLY MOVES TO REASSURE THE EGYPTIANS AND AMERICANS WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR SUPPORT. THE REGIME'S STATEMENTS ON THE NEED FOR NATIONAL UNITY, FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH AND AN EARLY RETURN TO DEMOCRACY ARE WELCOME AS ARE REFERENCES TO THE PROTECTION OF FOREIGNERS AND APPRECIATION OF FOREIGNERS' WORK IN SUDAN. SUDAN STILL FACES INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS: DROUGHT, ECONOMY, CIVIL WAR. PRACTICAL MEASURES TAKEN BY THE REGIME WILL GIVE A GUIDE TO ITS CHANCES OF SUCCESS. THE HANDLING OF RELATIONS WITH IMF AND AID DONORS WILL BE CRUCIAL. FULLER BACKGROUND IN KHARTOUM TELNO 189 AND KHARTOUM TELNO 200 (BOTH NOW BEING COPIED TO YOU).

HOWE

NNNN



LEB 103/10

00 FCO

00 KHARTOUM

00 CAIRO

00 WASHINGTON

00 JAKARTA

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 350

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM JEDDA 100650Z APR 85

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TEL NO 204 OF 10TH APRIL 1985

INFO IMMEDIATE KHARTOUM, CAIRO, WASHINGTON, JAKARTA (FOR PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY)

SUDAN COUP: SAUDI REACTIONS

SUMMARY

1. THE SAUDIS HAVE SAID THAT THEIR CLOSE RELATIONS WITH SUDAN WILL NOT BE AFFECTED BY THE COUP, AND KING FAHD HAS SENT A MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO GENERAL SOWAR EL DAHAB.

DETAIL

2. THE ONLY OFFICIAL SAUDI REACTION SO FAR TO THE SUDANESE COUP HAS BEEN A STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO 'AN OFFICIAL SOURCE', CARRIED BY LOCAL AND FOREIGN NEWS AGENCIES ON 7 APRIL, WHICH SAID THAT RECENT EVENTS IN KHARTOUM WERE 'AN INTERNAL MATTER, TO DO WITH THE WILL OF THE SUDANESE PEOPLE AND ITS LEADERSHIP.' THE STATEMENT ADDED THAT SAUDI ARABIA WAS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN AND TO STRENGTHEN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE NEW REGIME, FOR WHICH SHE WISHED EVERY SUCCESS.

3. THE FOLLOWING DAY (8 APRIL), THE LOCAL PRESS CARRIED THE TEXT OF A WARM MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS FROM KING FAHD TO GENERAL EL DAHAB. COINED IN SIMILAR TERMS TO THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT THE MESSAGE WISHED THE NEW REGIME SUCCESS AND PROMISED THAT THE 'BROTHERLY RELATIONS' BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA AND SUDAN WOULD BE MAINTAINED. THE PRESS ON 10 APRIL REPORTED THAT GENERAL EL DAHAB'S DEPUTY, GENERAL YOUSSEF HASSAN EL HAJ HAD ARRIVED IN RIYADH ON A VISIT.

4. THE LOCAL PRESS HAS REPORTED THE COUP IN A GENERALLY FACTUAL MANNER. THE ONLY EDITORIAL COMMENT SO FAR - IN THE JEDDA DAILY 'AL BILAD' ON 9 APRIL - PREDICTABLY ECHOES THE TERMS OF THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT. SAUDI ARABIA WANTED ONLY PEACE AND STABILITY FOR SUDAN, AND HOPED THAT THE NEW REGIME IN KHARTOUM WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE THE COUNTRY FORWARD WITHOUT FOREIGN INTERFERENCE.

COMMENT

5. WE TAKE THESE INDICATIONS AS A CLEAR SIGN THAT THE SAUDIS ARE DETERMINED TO GIVE THE NEW REGIME A FAIR WIND, AND TO PROVIDE REASSURANCE THAT ECONOMIC AID WILL NOT BE INTERRUPTED. I WOULD EXPECT THE SAUDIS TO BE CONCERNED AT THE POSSIBILITIES OF LIBYAN AND OTHER FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN SUDANESE AFFAIRS, BUT PERHAPS ALSO TO BE RELIEVED THAT THE REMOVAL OF NIMEIRI HAS BEEN MANAGED WITHOUT GREATER INSTABILITY OR BLOODSHED. THEY WILL CLEARLY BE FOLLOWING THE SITUATION VERY CLOSELY: IN THIS CONTEXT WE WERE VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT IN YOUR TELNO 220 TO KUALA LUMPUR, WHICH WE PASSED TO THE KING'S PRIVATE SECRETARY ON 6 APRIL.

WRIGHT