

Sudan: Force for the Future



The recent counterrevolutionary plots uncovered by the Sudan Secret Service reveal that the imperialists, using the most reactionary forces within the country, have not given up their aim of overthrowing the government headed by the president of the Sudanese Revolutionary Council, General Gaafar El Numeiry.

Last July 18, less than two months after the taking of power, the government announced that they had nipped in the bud a plot headed by the old leaders of the dissolved Umma Party, which in alliance with the Democratic Unionist Party had governed the country for four years.

With the backing of their supporters in the Army, the conspirators had formed a clandestine "government" headed by Saddik Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi, a nephew of the Iman Mahdi, who is a religious leader of the Ansar sect which, in conjunction with

the Khatmia sect, the followers of Mirghani, make up the Moslem population. Both Islamic chiefs are also the main feudal chiefs of the country whose families are among the richest and most powerful in the Arab world.

According to a report from Hatem Alta, a member of the Revolutionary Council, the conspirators had faith in "foreign aid from a military base located in a neighboring country." When the revolt was to begin four fighter planes and an equal number of transport planes from a certain "foreign power" were to arrive in Khartoum.

Later, on July 20, Prime Minister Abubakar Awadalla announced that the government "had ample material proof of the support given by the United States and West Germany to the counterrevolutionaries to cause disturbances in the country."

The separatists from the south, who had contacts with the Israelis, were also involved in the plot, according to a communiqué from the Sudanese Ministry of Interior. At the beginning of July the Israeli Minister of Foreign Relations, Aba Eban, made a tour of the East African countries that border on the southern provinces of Sudan: Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya.

Press reports emphasize the fact that in Uganda Foreign Minister Eban met with the separatist chiefs who were refugees in that country, to whom he had promised all kinds of help against the present Sudanese regime.

At the end of August, the Minister of Interior, Major Farouk Hamadalla, uncovered another counterrevolutionary plot among the police in Equatoria, the southernmost province of the country. At this time the President of the Council of the Revolution, El Numeiry reiterated the fact that the Federal Republic of Germany and

Israel economically and militarily support the southern counterrevolutionaries and that the United States and England "offer them all kinds of military instruction and weapons."

SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE SOUTH

Traditionally Sudan has faced two fundamental problems: the archaic social, economic and political structures and the lack of equality between the north and the south which has been aggravated by ethnic, tribal and religious discrepancies encouraged by the interests of the colonialists and the internal reactionaries.

Of the 14 million inhabitants of the country, more than 10 million are Moslems who live in the northern provinces and the rest are made up of Animist and Christians who live in Equatoria, Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile. Even though the entire country is submerged in a disturbing state of underdevelopment, the south has always been the most backward area, and has been the victim of discrimination and of the domination of the oligarchy which controlled the government and resided in the north.

This situation has given rise to resentment and hatred sharpened by racial, religious, federalist and separatist slogans. In 1955, on the eve of the independence that they were to obtain the following year from the new Egyptian government which rose out of the 1952 revolution, the separatists, egged on by the colonialists, rose up in arms in the three southern provinces. After several years, with the majority of their forces defeated, the chiefs of the rebellion sought asylum in the neighboring countries, but fighting still goes on in some regions.

General Numeiry stated that the existing situation in the south "cannot be solved by means of war." The government recognizes other ethnic groups on the condition that this did not jeopardize the unity of the country.

National unity is of exceptional importance for political stability. In accordance with this, the Minister who is in charge of southern affairs, Joseph Karnak, invited all the Sudanese refugees to return to their country, and at the beginning of August sent a special plane to Kampala, the capital of Uganda, to carry the first group of refugees from the southern provinces.

In response to the proposals from Khartoum, the separatist chiefs have rejected any idea of unity and have set up several "governments" in exile. In its last issue, the weekly *Jeune Afrique* reported the creation of a new group headed by General Enzidio Tefeng Lodongo, who is also chief of the Anya-Amaya movement which has used to its own advantage the inequalities prevalent in the two areas of the country.

Likewise Lodongo has refused to recognize or have any dealings with the "provisional government of the Nile," set up some weeks ago by Gordon Mortat Mayen, another secessionist chief.

The "sudden" formation of these separatist groups coincide with the Israeli Foreign Minister's tour of East Africa, which leads us to believe that such activities have been synchronized with the projected counter-revolutionary coups in Khartoum.

THE WAYS AND MEANS OF DEVELOPMENT

Internationally, the Sudanese Government has taken important measures of an undoubtedly progressive nature: support for



the Palestinian guerrillas and the African liberation movements; greater rapprochement with the Arab countries; closer relations with the socialist countries; recognition of the Democratic Republic of Germany and the South Viet-Nam Provisional Revolutionary Government. It has diplomatic relations on embassy level with the Democratic Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and others. But nationally they will have to make a gigantic effort to develop that huge country of more than two and a half million square kilometers with its rich potential but with an unimaginable degree of backwardness and poverty.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Relations, Abubakar Awadalla, who was one of the leaders of the 1964 "October Revolution" which overthrew the dictatorship of General Ibrahim Abboud, recently declared: "In fact all the activities of our society demand urgent and immediate reforms, since our society has been stagnant since we gained our independence. We are going to put an end to the native administration, introduce health reforms, educational reforms, as well as taking care

of the urgent demands of the people. These will be our goals."

The Sudanese leaders have begun to take the economic power out of the hands of the main family clans who traditionally also had political power. In the middle of August, the government confiscated the land and property of the two main families: Al Mahdi and Al Mirghani.

According to an announcement made by Major Abd Kasim Ibrahim, a member of the Council of the Revolution, in addition to the land, a cotton mill and a vegetable oil enterprise in Western Sudan were confiscated from the Al Mahdi family. Both the Al Mahdi family and the Al Mirghani family owed the state a half million Sudanese pounds in back taxes.

The Sudanese leaders have declared that the people expect their aspirations to be made a reality by the men who lead the Revolution and for them to show the bright side of Sudan in the international field, and on the domestic scene for them to work toward radical economic, social and cultural changes which will place the country on the path of progress and socialism.