

INFORMAL REPORT 25X1A2g

COUNTRY Anglo-Egyptian Sudan

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SUBJECT Sudanese Newspapers

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The most important Sudanese newspapers (all of which are printed in Arabic), their ownership and political affiliations are as follows:

- a. Al-Nil, a daily, which was first published in 1935, is the oldest newspaper in the Sudan. It has become the organ of the wealthiest, pro-government elements in that country, as the Printing and Publishing Company, which owns the paper, is controlled principally by the Mahdi family; Mustafa Abu al-Ila, the foremost Sudanese merchant; and G. Contomichalos, the principal Greek merchant in the Sudan. Although the paper is not the official organ of the Umma Party, it supports the policies of the Mahdi family and the Independence Front. Al-Nil opposes the unionist parties and often engages in controversies with 'Abdullah Mirghani's Sawt al-Sudan.
- b. Al-Umma, a daily, and the official organ of the Umma Party, often attacks Egypt on the issue of Sudan's independence. It is financed by the Party and, along with al-Nil, campaigns against the unionist parties.
- c. Sudan al-Gadid, started in 1943 as the first political weekly in the Sudan, in 1946 became a daily. Because of its capable editorial staff, the paper has played an important part in shaping political and social opinion in the Sudan. Officially, the paper supports no particular sect or party; actually, it usually supports the Independence Front.
- d. Al-Rai-al-Amm, established in 1945, already has the widest circulation in the Sudan and has gained the reputation of being the country's most reliable newspaper. The owners and editors of the paper follow a course of political moderation. Although the principal owner and editor of the paper, Ismail Atabani, is a prominent member of the Unionist Party, and although the unionists take an active part in guiding its policies, the paper continues to maintain an independent outlook. It often impartially criticizes the Sudan Government and attacks the Ashiqqa Party as well.

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- e. Sawt-al-Sudan, published by the al-Sala Printing Company, is owned entirely by Mirghani and other members of the Khatmia sect. It was started in 1941 and gradually became the chief exponent of the unionist cause, although, officially, it is not the organ of the Khatmia. The paper, therefore, is strongly anti-British and advocates union with Egypt. It often engages in bitter controversies with the Umma Party papers. Sawt-al-Sudan is also an outstanding and provocative critic of the government. Although Mirghani and other leading Khatmia members have suggested that the paper follow a moderate course, the editorial staff frequently capitalizes on the feelings of the people and stresses popular political and religious sentiments. Because of its appeal, the paper occasionally replaces al-Rai-al-Amm as the most widely circulated paper in the Sudan.
- f. Al-Ashiqqa, a daily, which began publication on 22 March 1948 as an organ of the Ashiqqa Party, claimed a circulation of 10,000. However, the paper gained a reputation for being unreliable. It was financed mainly by wealthy members of the Ashiqqa Party. In August 1948 it was announced that al-Ashiqqa would stop publication temporarily, because of "certain technical difficulties." It was printed by the Sudanese Printer.

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