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The Outlook for Sudan

Special National Intelligence Estimate

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THE OUTLOOK FOR SUDAN

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SCOPE NOTE

This Special National Intelligence Estimate assesses the outlook for Sudan over the next 12 to 15 months. It focuses on critical economic developments that could come to a head in the coming months. With IMF and promised donor aid, the Nimeiri regime has bought itself some time. It still must implement a politically risky economic reform program. President Nimeiri's constitutional term runs until May 1983. This SNIE looks at conditions or events that could shorten his allotted tenure.

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KEY JUDGMENTS

President Nimeiri has recently preempted a threat to his continued rule, but his support in the military clearly is slipping. While his replacement of several military leaders critical of his performance has reduced the immediate threat of a coup, a deteriorating economy and forthcoming austerity measures could trigger attempts to oust him. Furthermore, there is a risk that the military will not continue its support for Nimeiri if economic conditions deteriorate as expected. In such a case, the President's ability to remain in office through the end of his term in May 1983 is doubtful.

The government's belated efforts at economic reform will not bear positive results before two or three years, and living conditions will worsen during the coming year for the bulk of the Sudanese population. A hike in bread prices planned for April could result in serious unrest and renewed demonstrations against the regime.

Libyan leader Qadhafi poses the most serious external threat. Growing domestic unrest in Sudan will increase Nimeiri's vulnerability to foreign subversion.

The military almost certainly will play the dominant role in any successor regime. If senior officers were to take control of the government, policies toward the United States would probably remain unchanged. If junior officers were to assume control, Sudan would be likely to move away from its pro-US, pro-Egyptian orientation and toward the Arab middle ground.

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DISCUSSION

Significance for the United States

1. Sudan, the largest country in Africa, occupies a strategic position in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. In recent years the government of President Gaafar Nimeiri has played an important role that parallels US efforts to prevent the further growth of Soviet and Cuban influence in the region and to protect US access to vital oil supply routes.

2. Because of the strong US strategic interest in establishing a military presence in the region, Nimeiri's offer in March 1981 to make military facilities available to the United States—with the proviso that Sudan itself must be threatened before such facilities are used—has caused Sudan to assume greater importance to the United States. Access to facilities in Sudan could provide a valuable contribution to support of the US presence, deployments, exercises, and surge capability in the region. It will provide flexibility and redundancy to respond to contingencies in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Indian Ocean and throughout Africa. Additionally, Sudanese airspace is an important airlift avenue en route to countries in the region.

3. President Nimeiri supported the Camp David accords in 1978, when almost all other Arab leaders condemned Egyptian President Sadat's peace policy. In contrast to other Arab states, Sudan never broke diplomatic relations with Egypt, although Khartoum did recall its ambassador for several months. More recently, Nimeiri has worked to rally support for Egypt among moderate Arab states. In addition, Sudan has generally supported moderate positions in regional and international forums, despite pressures by radical Arab states.

4. In Africa, the importance of Sudan for the United States was heightened by the revolution of 1974 in Ethiopia and the subsequent establishment of a substantial Soviet and Cuban presence there, as well as by the signing of the tripartite Libyan-Ethiopian-

South Yemeni anti-Western alliance in August 1981. Sudan also has promoted peaceful resolution of regional conflicts, notably in Namibia and Western Sahara. Sudan has cooperated with Uganda's other neighbors to prevent Libyan exploitation of the unsettled situation in that country. President Nimeiri also attempted to orchestrate a diplomatic campaign among African states to force Libyan leader Qadhafi to withdraw his forces from Chad.

Recent History (The Problem)

5. Although initially openly hostile to the United States and inclined to align with the Soviet Bloc, President Nimeiri began moving Sudan's policies toward the center following an abortive Communist-led coup in July 1971. Subsequently, Nimeiri survived another major coup attempt in 1976 and serious antigovernment demonstrations in August 1979. He has been able to stay in power largely because of his ability to maintain the loyalty of the military and his skill in dealing with Sudan's disparate political and tribal groups. In 1972 Nimeiri negotiated an end to the 17-year-long civil war between northern Muslims and black southerners. In 1977, through his pursuit of national reconciliation, he persuaded key dissident groups to abandon subversive efforts against the central government. At the same time, he has used the security forces to effectively neutralize remaining opposition groups.

6. The most serious problem facing Nimeiri is longstanding but growing unhappiness over the regime's inability to reverse the nation's economic decline. By late 1981, chronic shortages of consumer commodities and gasoline appeared to be worsening. There has long been grumbling over the gradual decline in the standard of living

7. The increase in the official price of sugar announced on 31 December to honor a tentative agree-

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ment with the IMF led to a wave of student demonstrations and set the stage for a showdown between Nimeiri and his critics in the military. Nimeiri met with high-level civilian and military officials during the period 17-21 January to evaluate the disturbances and the country's economic problems. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Nimeiri moved decisively against those who had criticized his policies and leadership.

8. Abd al-Majid Khalil—mentioned most often as the likely successor if Nimeiri were forced from office—was relieved of his posts as First Vice President, Defense Minister, and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. He also was removed from his position as Secretary General of the Sudanese Socialist Union, the country's sole legal political organization. Nimeiri also fired a number of other senior officers, including the chief of staff, the commander of the airborne forces, and the commander of the Khartoum garrison—all positions of key importance to the regime's security.

9. By acting quickly, Nimeiri also prevented the traditional civilian opposition groups from uniting with his military critics. The Muslim Brotherhood continues to cooperate with the government, while the Ansar Muslim sect remained neutral during the crisis and consequently lost its opportunity to affect the outcome. Another major opposition group, the National Unionist Party, has been in disarray following the recent death of its leader Sharif al-Hindi.

10. Although the abruptness of Nimeiri's action caught his critics by surprise and lessened the chances of an immediate military coup, it has further isolated Nimeiri from objective criticism of his policies and has lowered the overall competence of senior officials. Minister of State Security Umar al-Tayyib, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has become the de facto number-two man in the regime, and seems likely to replace Khalil, who was an able professional officer, as first vice president. Nimeiri himself assumed Khalil's other duties as Defense Minister and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. Minister of Presidential Affairs Baha al-Din Idris, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Maj. Gen. Tawfiq Saleh Hassan Abu Kadok, Deputy Chief

of Staff for Administration, Maj. Gen. Yousif Ahmed Yousif, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, and Maj. Gen. Abd al-Rahman Suwar Dahab, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Training, reportedly will jointly perform the duties of chief of staff until Nimeiri selects a permanent replacement.

11. The confrontation with the military, moreover, leaves Nimeiri's room for maneuver considerably restricted. Even though he has removed some potentially disloyal officers, discontent remains.

The Faltering Economy

12. Sudan's precarious economic situation is the major factor behind the discontent that is threatening Nimeiri's rule. (See table 1.) Inflation now is running at an estimated 40 percent, foreign exchange is scarce, and the lot of the urban middle class is likely to worsen. After years of neglect and ineffective action, the government finally appears intent on pursuing economic reform. Moreover, the IMF and aid donors have required major policy changes in return for balance-of-payments support.

13. The adverse domestic economic trends of recent years worsened in 1981 as real output fell for the third straight year. Difficulties in the agricultural sector, which accounts for 40 percent of national output and almost all exports, are largely to blame. Production of cotton—Sudan's most important export crop—fell to half the 1978 level because of deteriorating irrigation facilities and disincentives arising from government pricing policies. Other major crops fared little better. Output in the small industrial sector faltered, with most plants operating well below 50 percent of capacity because of power cuts, labor disputes, poor man-

Table 1

Sudan: Economic Indicators

Population, mid-1981	19 million
Per Capita GDP, 1981	\$300
Real GDP Growth, 1979/80 (July-June)	-0.6%
1980/81	-0.5%
Money Supply Growth, 1979/80	21%
1980/81	50%
Inflation Rate, 1980	20%
1981	30%
Trade Deficit, 1981	\$1.1 billion
Foreign Exchange Reserves, December 1981	\$17 million

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agement, and shortages of imported spare parts and raw materials.

14. Persistent government mismanagement has resulted in rapidly expanding budget deficits. Domestic government borrowing to finance these deficits and increased credit to money-losing public-sector firms led to a 50-percent increase in the money supply in the year ending 30 June 1981. The government's efforts to reduce subsidies on consumer goods by raising prices has added to current inflationary pressures: a 39-percent increase in petroleum prices in November was followed by a 63-percent hike in sugar prices and 10- to 25-percent increases in cigarette prices in January.

15. Sudan's domestic economic problems are more than matched by the magnitude of its foreign payments difficulties. The 1981 performance was particularly poor as exports of \$500 million were dwarfed by imports totaling \$1.6 billion. By the end of 1981 foreign exchange virtually disappeared from the banking system and Sudan's access to international credit dried up. Thirty-day credits for petroleum purchases were no longer available and the country's sole refinery was forced to close briefly for lack of imported crude.

16. Uncontrolled borrowing for overambitious development projects started in the 1970s left Sudan saddled with an enormous foreign debt—an estimated \$3.1 billion at the end of 1980—and arrearages of about \$1.3 billion—more than double 1981 export earnings. After two years of negotiations, Sudan reached agreement with foreign banks in late 1981 to reschedule \$500 million of overdue loans and efforts are being made to reschedule \$370 million in unpaid suppliers credits.

17. Sudan's exceedingly difficult financial position has made the country dependent on foreign aid and IMF loans. In the fiscal year ending 30 June 1981, Sudan received close to \$1 billion in economic aid and IMF loans. The IMF was the largest single source of funds, providing \$300 million under a three-year Extended Fund Facility. Saudi Arabia provided \$150 million in project and special balance-of-payments aid; the United States provided \$127 million in economic assistance. (See table 2.)

18. The government's inability to come to grips with the country's difficulties, combined with the nonpayment of foreign obligations, has seriously un-

Table 2

**Sudan: Estimated Official Transfers,
Capital Inflows, and IMF Loans 1980/81**
(million US dollars)

IMF, Net.....	300
Saudi Arabia.....	150
United States.....	127
EC/Japan.....	118
Kuwait.....	50
Abu Dhabi Fund.....	50
Arab Monetary Fund.....	30
World Bank.....	35
United Arab Emirates.....	25
Other Arab.....	35
Other Bilateral/Multilateral.....	35
Total.....	955

dermined the confidence of foreign aid donors, the IMF, and private creditors. Propelled by the insistence of foreign creditors that Sudan press forward with economic reform, as well as by the realization that changes were needed, Sudan reached a tentative agreement with the IMF in October 1981 for a \$220 million loan tied to a new one-year economic reform program. This replaces the final year of its three-year Extended Fund Facility arrangement, whose conditions Sudan had failed to meet.

19. Although Nimeiri took the initial steps set out in the IMF agreement—devaluation, a 39-percent increase in petroleum prices, a 10-percent hike in customs duties, and a commitment to phase out sugar and wheat subsidies—the agreement quickly unraveled when Nimeiri removed Finance Minister Sulayman, the architect of the program. The IMF also was concerned about a shortfall in government revenues and the failure of aid donors to provide sufficient balance-of-payments support for 1982. In early January 1982 the IMF agreement was patched up and Sudan managed to cover its revenue shortfall by raising sugar and cigarette prices and increasing customs duties. The agreement was approved by the IMF Board on 18 February, and, if aid promised by donors comes about, this will meet essential 1982 foreign exchange requirements.

Economic Prospects

20. Although recent aid pledges and the IMF loan will buy time by covering Sudan's 1982 foreign pay-

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ments needs, Khartoum still must deal with the politically sensitive task of imposing additional economic reforms and austerity measures as part of its IMF agreement. Government price hikes, continuing shortages, and inflation will worsen the position of urban workers and the middle class. The 33-percent increase in bread prices scheduled for April could create serious unrest. Another round of bread price hikes may occur in the summer.

21. Should Sudan fail to make reforms under the IMF agreement, Khartoum would lose access to IMF funds after its May performance review. This would eliminate the \$105 million in IMF funds scheduled for release in the second half of 1982. The resultant foreign exchange crisis would cause domestic instability. Such a failure of the IMF agreement also would threaten Sudan's access to funds from aid donors.

22. Two separate events in 1982 will have significant implications for Sudan's longer term economic prospects:

- The World Bank will host an aid donors meeting in May to discuss a three-year investment program it is drawing up jointly with Sudan. This program is expected to commit Sudan to policies necessary for agricultural and industrial recovery.
- Financial arrangements to build an oil refinery at Kusti (Kosti) are to be concluded this year. Oil discoveries by Chevron since 1979 are the major bright spot in Sudan's economic future. While exploration is expanding, discoveries to date are relatively small—sufficient to produce only 25,000 barrels a day—and will not benefit the economy until the Kusti refinery is built. Sudan, the World Bank, and Chevron are in the process of negotiating financing for the refinery, with the goal of completing arrangements this year so that construction can begin and the refinery can become operational in 1986.

Domestic Challenge

23. While Nimeiri has successfully weakened the *Ansar Muslim* sect—whose adherents constitute approximately one-fifth of Sudan's estimated 19 million people—it continues to be a significant force on the Sudanese political scene. The principal Ansar leader,

Sadiq al-Mahdi, has withdrawn from direct participation in the government because of Nimeiri's refusal to grant him a larger role. A small group headed by Sadiq's cousin, Wali ad-Din al-Hadi al-Mahdi, never accepted reconciliation with Nimeiri and continues actively to oppose the regime.

24. Reflecting the historic Ansar distrust of Egypt, Sadiq disapproves of Nimeiri's close ties with Cairo. He also opposed Nimeiri's decision to resist the Libyan presence in Chad and his offer of military facilities to the United States. Sadiq has periodically visited Libya and probably has received financial support from Qadhafi.

25. The *Muslim Brotherhood* is the most conservative of all organized Islamic groups in Sudan. Its primary base has been the faculty and the student body of the University of Khartoum. Despite its small membership—estimates vary widely between 60,000 and 300,000 nationwide—the appeal of the Brotherhood's militant brand of Islam has made it a significant political force. Consequently, even though the Brotherhood's leader, Hasan al-Turabi, serves as Attorney General, some security officials regard the organization as a threat to the regime and closely monitor its activities.

26. In recent months, growing public unhappiness with the regime has forced Nimeiri to rely more heavily on the Brotherhood. During the January disorders, Turabi ordered Brotherhood students to restrict their activities to the campuses and not to participate in street demonstrations. Nevertheless, because of the gains made by the Brotherhood in the January elections for the National Assembly, where it now reportedly controls over a quarter of the seats, Nimeiri may feel compelled to take steps to reduce its influence.

27. The *National Unionist Party* is the most important of those groups actively seeking the overthrow of Nimeiri. It reflects the views of secular merchants, civil servants, and professionals who oppose the conservative forces represented by the Ansars and the Muslim Brotherhood and resent the dominant role of the Army. In the past the party drew much of its strength from the Khatmiyyah Muslim sect, the principal rival of the Ansar. Somewhat smaller than the Ansar, the more loosely organized and less militant Khatmiyyah sect historically has favored closer rela-

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tions with Egypt. The party now appears to have split into two factions: the Khatmiyyah sect and a more leftist group formerly headed by Sharif al-Hindi, who died in January. Al-Hindi's departure removes one of Nimeiri's bitterest critics from the scene. He probably will be succeeded as leader of the party by his deputy, Ahmed Zein Abdin. Although the January demonstrations in Khartoum over the increase in the price of sugar were spontaneous, National Unionists and Communists may have orchestrated the more violent protests that followed in the provinces.

28. The *Sudanese Communist Party* was estimated to have 15,000 members in mid-1979, but it has been seriously weakened by government actions since the disorders in August 1979, in which the Communists played a significant part. The party, nevertheless, has considerable assets in the labor movement and among students. Although it can no longer mount a direct challenge to the regime, it can stimulate unrest.

29. The *Sudanese Ba'th Party* has only a few hundred members and does not constitute a serious danger to the Nimeiri regime. Active primarily at the University of Khartoum, it is closely monitored by security officials.

30. *Student groups*, often a barometer of public opinion, have participated in a number of anti-Nimeiri demonstrations. Student involvement in anti-regime demonstrations in 1964 helped bring down the military government. Campus politics, especially at the university level, are influenced by various radical elements, including followers of the illegal Sudanese Communist Party and by the conservative Muslim Brotherhood. The government has in the past provided free education and transportation. Recent economic pressures, however, have caused some of these privileges to be curtailed, contributing to student demonstrations in December 1981 and January 1982.

31. *Communist-influenced labor unions* also have demonstrated against the government over economic issues. The railroad strike in 1981 was harshly dealt with by Nimeiri. Although unions did not participate in the most recent series of student demonstrations, they could find common cause and join in or organize popular demonstrations if general unrest grows. Such events could compel the regime to use its military forces to maintain control.

Sectional Tensions

32. North-south tensions, which had been gradually easing since the conclusion of the Addis Ababa agreement of 1972 that ended a 17-year-long civil war, began to intensify again in early 1980. The predominantly black, non-Muslim southerners have long believed that they have not received a fair share of development funds and have also been concerned over efforts by northern Muslims to give Islamic Sharia law greater force. The choice of Kusti in the north for the proposed site of a small refinery—rather than Bentiu in the south, which is close to recent oil discoveries—is seen by southerners as a deliberate effort to deprive the south of its natural resources. Despite a compromise intended to give southerners more employment and greater access to the products of the refinery, protests over the location of the refinery are likely to continue.

33. The north-south division was further exacerbated by the dissolution last October of the southern regional assembly and the replacement of the southern executive council by a military administration. Although new elections and a referendum on dividing the south into three regions are to be held this spring, it is clear that Nimeiri favors that division as a means of reducing the dominant role of the Dinka tribe in southern politics. The creation of new administrative units could cause greater tribal conflict, increase southern resentment against the north, and make the south more susceptible to Libyan- and Ethiopian-sponsored subversion.

34. Western Sudanese, many of whom have close links with their fellow tribesmen in Chad, are particularly susceptible to Libyan-sponsored subversion. Many of them travel to Libya, and at least some have been recruited by Libya for destabilization missions into Sudan. The Libyan withdrawal from Chad, however, has reduced somewhat the danger of cross-border raids into western Sudan by Libyan-trained dissidents.

The Military: Key to Nimeiri's Survival

35. The military helped Nimeiri come to power in 1969, and the continued support of key military personnel and units has allowed him to remain in

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power. The Army proved loyal to Nimeiri during the conflict with the Ansars in 1970, even though many of its personnel were at least nominal members of the sect. It was Army support that enabled Nimeiri to regain power following the abortive Communist-led coup in July 1971. Although some officers joined the rebels during the 1976 Libyan-backed, Ansar-led coup attempt, and many other members of the armed forces remained neutral, Nimeiri was able to maintain control with the support of personnel from key units. Since then, the regime has stepped up efforts to maintain military loyalty.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Much of this discontent is attributed to Nimeiri's failure to consult with his advisers before taking action, his public berating of individual officers, and his inability to justify his economic austerity program. The Army, however, did respond when called on to assist police in containing student demonstrations and closing down schools in Khartoum during the January 1982 demonstrations. His recent purge of senior officers probably will help Nimeiri in the short term, in part because of the confusion caused among his military and political critics.

37. Many senior officers apparently view the removal of First Vice President Khalil as a disagreeable event, but not one that requires immediate reaction. The near-term chances of a coup by senior officers has been decreasing with the passage of time. Moreover, Khalil, who figured in most plans to replace Nimeiri, reportedly is opposed to succession by other than constitutional means. Nevertheless, anti-Nimeiri sentiment is likely to grow as economic difficulties worsen.

38. The loyalty of junior officers remains unclear but they are suffering economic hardship. Following the showdown with his critics in January, Nimeiri reportedly planned to announce an immediate pay increase for middle and lower ranks. Even a pay hike would do little to improve Nimeiri's popularity among junior officers, whose salaries must be stretched to support their extended families.

39. [REDACTED] concern over the sentiments of the "young majors"—a group identified as not fully supporting the regime. These

are officers who graduated from military college shortly after the 1969 revolution and before the abortive coup in July 1971. These military classes were particularly large (300 to 700 in each class instead of the normal 100 to 200) and therefore face reduced chances for rapid promotion over the next few years.

40. The Sudanese police, who have the primary responsibility for controlling demonstrators during disturbances such as those in January 1982, have for years been plagued by poor morale because of low pay and prestige. Shortages in personnel and longstanding rivalries with the Army may hinder the ability of the police to contain future disturbances. There were, however, no reports of police refusing to confront protesters in January.

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41. The survival of the regime ultimately depends on the continued willingness of the military to use force to put down widespread public disorders. In October 1964 the government of Ibrahim Abbud fell when the Army refused to suppress massive street demonstrations. Additional government-imposed austerity measures seem certain to increase sentiment in the military for Nimeiri's removal, even among those officers who have consistently supported him. Morale, perhaps the key factor in the willingness of the military to support the regime, appears now to be the lowest it has been in recent years.

Foreign Policy

42. Sudanese foreign policy under Nimeiri until recently has been conciliatory and pragmatic, aimed at avoiding conflict with better armed neighboring states and at securing badly needed foreign economic aid. Nimeiri tried to maintain friendly relations with both Egypt and Saudi Arabia after the Camp David accords in 1978, to improve relations with Ethiopia beginning in 1979, and, to the extent possible, neutralize the Libyan threat. The peacemaker role that he attempted to play in African disputes—Chad, Eritrea, the Ogaden—and in the radical-conservative Arab split enhanced his prestige in the OAU and the Arab councils.

43. But Nimeiri's balancing act began to fall apart following Libya's military intervention in Chad in December 1980. The Libyan military threat to western Sudan through Chad propelled him into greater

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dependence on Egyptian military support (through the Egyptian-Sudanese mutual defense pact of 1976) and on the United States (whose military aid to Sudan tripled in 1981). Moreover, the signing of the Libyan-Ethiopian-South Yemeni pact in August 1981 (and the initiation of Libyan-Ethiopian subversive plots against Sudan) has increased Nimeiri's security concerns.

44. The resultant closer alignment of Khartoum's foreign policy with those of Cairo and Washington has burned Sudan's bridges to the radical Arabs and strained its relations with some conservative Arabs. Nimeiri's public vendettas against Libya, the PLO, Syria, and Iraq have intensified the threats to Sudan's internal security. In addition, his campaign against Qadhafi has received little support from other African states and led to his isolation on that issue at the June 1981 OAU summit.

45. During the late January 1982 confrontation between Nimeiri and elements of his government, a review of Sudanese foreign policy was recommended to see if it has adversely affected Sudan's ability to obtain Arab aid. Moreover, Nimeiri's conduct of foreign policy—especially his open quarreling with the radical Arabs—has contributed to the unease with his political leadership. Thus far, however, questioning of the close ties with Egypt appears to be muted; most Sudanese see no alternative for the time being.

Egypt

46. The close Sudanese-Egyptian relationship is dictated by geographic, economic, and cultural ties and, in recent years, by Nimeiri's need for Egyptian military backing against external enemies. Even so, the relationship is an ambivalent one, largely because of Sudanese fear of Egyptian dominance. Many Sudanese resent Cairo's "big brother knows best" attitude and resist subordination of Sudan's national interests to those of Egypt.

47. Nimeiri initially endorsed the Camp David accords; by late 1978, however, his need for financial support from conservative Arabs caused him to qualify his support and in December 1979 he lowered Sudanese diplomatic relations with Egypt to the charge d'affaires level. A shift came in March 1981 when full diplomatic relations were resumed, followed by Egyptian President Sadat's visit to Khartoum in May and Nimeiri's visit to Cairo in July.

Saudi Arabia

48. The Saudis value Sudan as an anti-Communist state that helps counter the influence of pro-Soviet states in the Red Sea region. But Sudan also has shortcomings from the Saudi perspective:

- Riyadh is lukewarm about Nimeiri, recalling his early radical days and worrying about his political staying power

- While the Saudis understand Sudan's need for a close security relationship with Egypt, Nimeiri's explicit support for Egypt and the Camp David accords makes it difficult for them to grant Sudan large amounts of aid

Ethiopia

49. A historical antipathy exists between "Christian" Ethiopia and Muslim Sudan, but it has waxed and waned depending on the political orientation of the regimes in Khartoum and Addis Ababa:

- Sudanese relations with Haile Selassie improved after Nimeiri's break with the Communists in 1971, and the Emperor helped to mediate the settlement of the Sudanese civil war.
- Relations deteriorated again after the revolutionary military regime took power in Ethiopia in 1974. The nadir came in 1976 when Ethiopia supported an unsuccessful Libyan coup against Nimeiri, and Nimeiri reacted by endorsing an independent Eritrean state.
- Ethiopian leader Mengistu and Nimeiri reached a rapprochement in late 1979 and the Sudanese initiated an effort to mediate the Eritrean problem. But Nimeiri was unable to arrange negotiations between Addis Ababa and the insurgents.
- By the summer of 1981 Ethiopia's serious economic problems contributed to Mengistu's decision to negotiate the tripartite pact with Libya

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and South Yemen, in order to get Libyan financial aid. Qadhafi's quid pro quo included Ethiopian cooperation in subversion against Nimeiri. Until recently Mengistu's cooperation has been halfhearted, reflecting his desire to prevent renewed Sudanese support to the Eritreans. As of early 1982, however, Mengistu may have decided to increase his support for Libyan-sponsored anti-Nimeiri operations.

50. It is possible that the current fighting in Eritrea may inadvertently spill over the border into Sudan. While Mengistu might sanction "hot pursuit" raids should Nimeiri lift current restrictions on Eritrean dissidents in Sudan, he clearly hopes to restrict the fighting to Ethiopian territory.

Libya

51. Qadhafi's hostility to Nimeiri, originally related to the Libyan leader's desire to hurt Egypt through its more vulnerable neighbor and supporter, has become a deep-seated personal antipathy. The Libyan leader has used a variety of Sudanese dissident groups to attempt to subvert the Nimeiri regime. Tripoli backed unsuccessful Ansar coup attempts in 1975 and 1976, and members of the sect figure in some of the subversive efforts now being mounted from Tripoli and Addis Ababa. Qadhafi has aided other Sudanese dissidents, including the late Sharif al-Hindi and southern Sudanese. Until the withdrawal of Libyan forces from Chad in late 1981, Qadhafi was able to use the Chad-Sudan border as a staging area for sabotage and air raids against Chadian insurgents based in Sudan.

52. The withdrawal from Chad has largely eliminated Libya's ability to threaten Sudan with conventional military force. But Qadhafi's major threat has always been subversion, which he sees as providing the best opportunity for overthrowing the Khartoum regime. He is continuing to recruit and train Sudanese dissidents. In addition, Ethiopian cooperation under the tripartite pact gives Qadhafi new bases from which to mount subversive operations.

The Hardline Arabs

53. Nimeiri's relations with the hardline Arabs have been uneasy since the early 1970s and worsened after

Sudan began to support Egypt openly on the Camp David accords. Iraq has been the most hostile and has aided Sudanese dissidents, including al-Hindi and the Ba'thists. Diplomatic relations were broken in 1979, but they were resumed in 1980 when Nimeiri endorsed Iraq's call for an Arab charter, which he sees as a way of enticing Baghdad away from Moscow.

54. Nimeiri expelled the local PLO representatives in Khartoum in February 1981 and publicly attacked the PLO leadership in May 1981. At the same time he denounced Syrian activities in Lebanon and downgraded Sudanese diplomatic representation in Damascus.

The USSR

55. The Soviets would certainly applaud Nimeiri's ouster. They consider the Nimeiri regime tied to the United States and have criticized Sudan for alleged provocations against Libya and Chad. Moscow, for example, was quick to point out Sudan's participation in the US Operation Bright Star and claims that the exercise was a "dress rehearsal" for an invasion of Libya. There is nothing to indicate the Soviets are directly involved in efforts to destabilize the Khartoum regime. The Soviets were expelled from Sudan in 1971 because of their suspected complicity in a coup attempt led by the Sudanese Communist Party. Relations were restored in 1972.

56. Moscow probably values Libyan and Ethiopian efforts to destabilize the Sudanese regime. Similarly, the Soviets probably view the tripartite agreement among South Yemen, Ethiopia, and Libya last summer as a useful balance to Nimeiri's pro-US posture and hope it will facilitate better coordination of subversive political efforts aimed at undermining Nimeiri.

Outlook/Succession

57. Since taking power in 1969, Nimeiri has survived many serious challenges to his rule and in each instance military support has been critical to his success. The student protests in early 1982, and the showdown between Nimeiri and his critics in the military, however, demonstrate that Nimeiri's support in the military has been eroded.

58. Nimeiri's dismissal of First Vice President and Defense Minister Abd al-Majid Khalil and more than

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20 other high-level officers probably has reduced temporarily the chances of a military move against him. The short-term stability of the government probably also will be enhanced as Nimeiri loyalists replace the purged officers.

59. Nimeiri's longer term survivability would be enhanced by large-scale infusions of additional economic aid to finance increased imports. To stem the loss of public confidence in Nimeiri's leadership, however, such assistance would have to be on the order of several hundred million dollars more than is currently being provided by donors and the IMF. Most donors are reluctant to provide additional assistance of that magnitude. Significant new aid, if obtained, would discourage the regime from instituting essential economic reforms. It could also discourage creditors from being generous in rescheduling debts. Substantially higher aid from the United States would clearly identify Washington with the present regime in the minds of most Sudanese, and consequently could damage US relations with a successor government.

60. Attempts by groups in the military to depose Nimeiri or to force him to resign remain a distinct possibility. Even some of those officers who supported him in January might seek his removal in the event of a renewal of public disorders. Such demonstrations could occur without warning or specific cause, although they probably would be triggered by new austerity measures, such as the bread price rise scheduled for April. There could be protests this summer when temperatures will be high and rain will compound the already serious communication, transportation, and supply problems. The Muslim holy month of Ramadan, when fasting makes tempers short, also falls during the hottest part of the year. Moreover, should Sudan lose access to IMF funds after its May performance review, it will experience a sharp increase in domestic unrest. This will severely test the military's loyalty to the regime.

61. Thus, there are many factors working against Nimeiri's remaining in office until his present six-year term ends in May 1983. Although he appears to have recovered fully from a stroke suffered about April 1980, he has been under considerable pressure since late 1981 and his behavior has been erratic. If he believes that the opposition to his continuing in office is again building, Nimeiri could decide to step down

before his opponents move against him. Although his threats to resign earlier this year now appear to have been a ploy, he may actually have been prepared to step down rather than risk clashes between supporters and critics.

62. Should Nimeiri leave office voluntarily, Umar al-Tayyib—if, as seems likely, he becomes first vice president—would succeed temporarily to the presidency. Presidential elections are constitutionally required within 60 days. Tayyib, however, is widely disliked in the military and, even if he were to win the election, might soon be forced from office. We would expect policies under a government controlled by Tayyib to differ little from those under Nimeiri. Sudan would be likely to maintain its pro-Western and pro-Egyptian foreign policy. Tayyib probably would be a very weak leader, however, and more easily influenced by his advisers than Nimeiri.

63. The military is almost certain to play a major role in any successor government regardless of whether the change occurs by constitutional means or if Nimeiri is forced from office. A government controlled by politically conservative senior officers probably is the most likely should Nimeiri fall within the next few months. In that event, policies toward the United States and the West probably would change very little. US relations with a successor regime, even one dominated by conservatives, however, could be damaged if leaders of the new government believed that the United States had interfered in Sudanese internal affairs to maintain Nimeiri in power. Such a government would be suspicious of Soviet intentions in the region and any improvement in relations between Khartoum and Moscow would come slowly. Sudan's present identification with Egypt is unpopular with many Sudanese, however, both in and out of the military, and Sudanese-Egyptian relations under a conservative military government probably would cool somewhat.

64. As long as Nimeiri continues in office and frustration with present policies builds, a coup by younger and more radical officers becomes increasingly likely. If younger officers with a nationalist or Pan-Arab orientation were the dominant force in a new government, Sudan probably would move toward a more nonaligned position. Such a regime would attempt to ease strains with Libya and Ethiopia, al-

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though it would remain suspicious of the goals of Qadhafi and Mengistu. Such a Sudanese regime would continue to seek aid from the United States, but also would improve relations with the USSR and East European states. In domestic affairs, Sudan probably would again turn toward a socialist economy, reverse or at least stop the present regime's policy of divesting itself of state-owned corporations, and take a more aggressive policy toward the south, an action that could stimulate new conflict between the two parts of the country.

65. If younger officers or enlisted men with a radical or extreme leftist orientation were to control a successor government—an unlikely possibility, but one that cannot be completely discounted—US interests in Sudan and the region would be very seriously damaged. Soviet influence would be greatly enhanced and considerably increased opportunities would be provided for Libyan and Ethiopian activity in regional affairs.

66. The nonmilitary opposition groups in Sudanese society are unlikely to control a successor government, but might well be invited to participate in a military-dominated coalition. Under a successor government in which conservative elements in Sudanese society—the Ansar Muslim sect and the Muslim Brotherhood—played a role, Sudan would move away from its pro-Western and pro-US stance, and distance itself from Egypt and move toward the Arab middle ground. The USSR, however, probably would be unable to increase its influence significantly. Sudan probably would rescind its offer of military facilities to the United States, although the government also would oppose Soviet use of such facilities anywhere in the area. It would, nevertheless, continue to seek economic aid from the United States. The leftist opposition groups—the radical wing of the National Unionist Party, the Sudanese Ba'th Party, and the Sudanese Communist Party—are unlikely to play a role in a successor government controlled by conservatives or nationalists, but could have considerable influence if a radical, Libyan-style regime succeeded the present government.

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BIOGRAPHIC ANNEX

Gaafar Mohamed NIMEIRI

Gaafar Mohamed Nimeiri, aided by a small circle of "free officers," seized power in a coup in May 1969 and named himself Prime Minister. He became President in September 1971 and, except for 13 months during 1976-77, has continued to serve as Prime Minister.

After taking over the government, Nimeiri successfully overcame opposition, first from conservative Muslim groups and then from Communists and their sympathizers. In February 1972 he settled the 17-year-long insurrection in the south, granted amnesty to the rebels, gave the area partial autonomy, and integrated southerners into the government. In February 1981 he granted partial autonomy to other regions as well.

Nimeiri has the reputation of being hard driving, yet calm. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] career Army officer until the 1969 coup, Nimeiri attended the US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, during 1965-66. Before coming to power he was arrested several times for coup plotting. [REDACTED]

Umar Muhammad al-TAYYIB

Maj. Gen. Umar Muhammad al-Tayyib has served since 1978 as Minister of State Security and since October 1981 as Third Vice President. Close to the President, he is responsible for both internal and external intelligence and has often acted as Nimeiri's envoy on foreign missions. Tayyib clearly harbors aspirations of becoming president.

Although Nimeiri's dismissal of Abd al-Majid Khalil as First Vice President leaves Tayyib as number-two man in the regime, Nimeiri, aware of Tayyib's unpopularity with the military, has delayed naming him as first vice president. Nevertheless, Tayyib remains the most likely successor to Nimeiri if the Sudanese President should decide to leave office voluntarily before the end of his present term in May 1983.

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25X**Abel ALIER Wal Kwai**

Second Vice President since 1971, Alier is the highest ranking southerner in the national government. As the "southern" Vice President, he has—during his career—consistently advocated the southern view, while supporting the national government. He was instrumental in arranging the February 1972 cease-fire with the southern rebels, ending Sudan's 17-year-long civil war. Much of Alier's influence derives from his close relationship with Nimeiri, though he may currently be somewhat out of favor because of his opposition to Nimeiri's plans to administratively divide the south. Alier is not thought to play any role in the current political realignments being undertaken by Nimeiri.

The 49-year-old Alier (who holds a law degree from Yale) served as President of the High Executive Council, the south's regional governing body, during 1972-78 and again from May 1980 until the council was dissolved by Nimeiri in October 1981. Despite losing his power base as Council President, Alier (who is a Dinka tribesman) is believed to have retained strong support in the south; he will probably remain a pivotal factor in southern Sudanese politics.

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