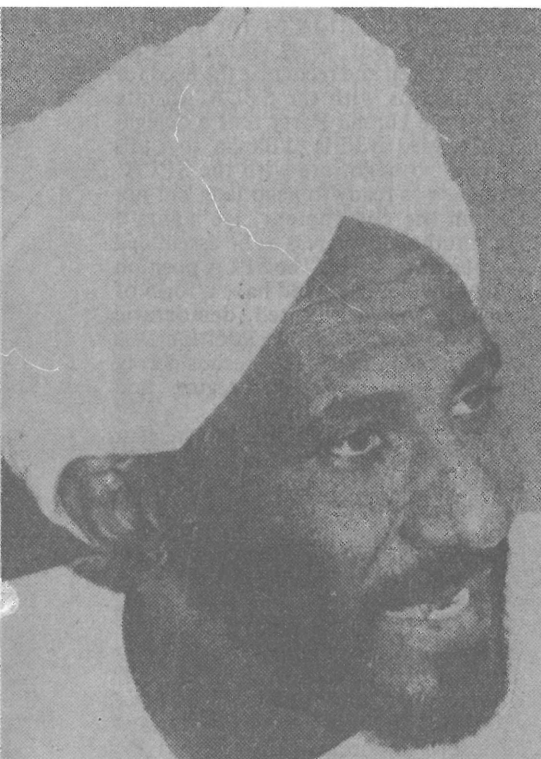




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ting, but that this should be accompanied by a political solution acceptable to the people of the South. The southerners should have the right to benefit from the oil resources in the South, and Islamic law should be cancelled.

THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM

General Swareddehab, head of the transitional Military Council, has said

that the economic situation threatens Sudan's independence. Numeiri left Sudan literally bankrupt. "The foreign debt is more than \$10 billion; inflation is 100%; and the foreign currency reserves in the Central Bank are only 10,000 Belgian francs" (*Al Safir*, Beirut, May 12th). The IMF stopped loans to Sudan because it hadn't paid the interest due on previous loans - \$218 million.

Under Numeiri, Sudan imported twice as much as it exported, due to the destruction of productive projects and the transfer of most money loaned to private bank accounts abroad. Numeiri subordinated Sudan totally to the US, economically and politically. In return, the US delayed his downfall by providing short-term loans that were eventually recycled into personal accounts in the US. Financial institutions and banks had paid 60% of their profit to the state in taxes, but with the introduction of Islamic law in 1983, the tax was reduced to a ridiculous 2.5%, increasing bank profits and lowering state revenue, in order to be in line with Islamic doctrine!

The platforms of the Umma Party and the DUP for dealing with the economy are based on generalities: coexistence between the private and public sector; reducing dependency on the IMF; and stamping out corruption in the government. The Islamic Nationalist Front claims that the way to solve Sudan's economic problems is by continuing the Islamic banking system.

The Communist Party has a more detailed plan. It stresses the development of agriculture in general and grain cultivation in particular. That would help relieve famine, reduce Sudan's dependence on US wheat and lessen the IMF's leverage. The Communist Party stresses revitalizing production to full capacity, retraining government personnel and excluding parasitic sectors from government decision-making. The Central Bank should have full control of financial activities, in order to protect the Sudanese pound. In the Communist Party's view, the capitalist orientation of the economy must be altered if the economic crisis is to be resolved.

FOREIGN POLICY

There are many common positions among the Sudanese parties in foreign policy questions. All oppose the Camp David accords, though there are differences in the intensity of their opposition. The Umma and the Communist Party view the accords as treason which serves neither the Egyptian nor Arab people. The DUP and the Islamic Nationalist Front view the accords as "hurting the reputation" of Egypt, but that the accords are "in practical terms, dead".

Concerning overall relations with Egypt, all parties concur on the importance of the historical relations that have always existed between the two countries. The Umma is for continuing the historical relations, but cancelling the security provision in the agreements

with Egypt. The DUP and Islamic Nationalist Front are both for continuing relations with Egypt unconditionally. The Communist Party advocates that the historical relations be transformed into militant relations between the two peoples, and that the joint defense agreement with Egypt be cancelled.

All parties agree on improving relations with Libya. The Communist Party has a distinctive militant position of supporting Libya in its confrontation with imperialism. All parties support the Palestinian people and their armed struggle. All call for an end to the Gulf war, though the DUP and the Islamic Nationalist Front sympathize with Iraq.

All the Sudanese parties advocate a policy of non-alignment. While the Communist Party calls for consolidating relations with the socialist community, and its vanguard the Soviet Union, the others call for "balanced relations" between the US and the Soviet Union. Even the latter position will in the end mean improvement of relations with the Soviet Union in contrast to the total control formerly exercised by the US over Sudan. The Sudanese political parties cannot forget the extent to which US imperialism has interfered in their country. They do not forget how the US stopped aid to Sudan after the uprising and cancellation of Sudan's joint defense agreement with Egypt. The US is now setting conditions for the resumption of aid, including Sudan's not signing a defense agreement with Libya, the expulsion of 120 Palestinians whom the US considers to be "terrorists", and continuing Numeiri's anti-communist policies - which amount to dictating Sudan's policy.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

These are the main problems facing Sudan with which the newly elected government will have to deal. There is another problem that persists, due to the country's long history of dictatorship. Though Numeiri's forces were ousted from top positions, they are still present and exert strong influence under the cover of the Islamic National Front. Nor were they eliminated from the armed forces. The Sudanese people should be aware that these reactionary forces are waiting for the proper moment to regain power. The remnants of the dictatorship must be eliminated in order to consolidate democracy. The Islamic laws must be cancelled, the election law revised, and a democratic solution found for the problem of the South. These tasks should be coupled with a solution to the economic crisis which favors the interests of the impoverished masses, while severing relations with US imperialism and restricting the activities of reactionary forces, as the first step to eliminating their influence. The newly formed government has just begun to address these problems.