

MUNICH, 11 June 1971 (CAA/X).

The denunciation of Sudanese Communists as "saboteurs" by the country's President, Ja'far al-Nimeri (reported by the Iraqi News Agency on April 20) indicates that there is no abatement of the régime's campaign against its former allies. It also marks the failure of the most sophisticated of all Arab Communist Parties to establish a secure political base, despite years of careful effort, from which to adapt Communist theory to the particular problems of the Sudan. Once again, imported "scientific Socialism" has proved unable to withstand an ill-defined Arab "Socialism" whose strength lies in the fact that it is indigenous.

After the revolution of May, 1969, relations between the Sudanese Government and the Communist Party were initially good. Nimeri relied on Communists for the organisation of popular demonstrations, there were Communist members of the ruling revolution Command Council and Communists became Ministers. But 1970 saw Nimeri purging many from positions of authority. A major cause of the rift lay in the plans for the Federation of the UAR, Sudan, Libya and Syria, which required the dissolution of political parties in the member States. The Communists resisted and the Secretary-General, Abd al-Khaliq Mahgoub, was arrested.

The Federation of Arab Republics was declared on April 17 with three members, Nimeri explaining that Sudan would join when she had completed her "constitutional construction". Some observers took this to be a reference to the rebellion in the South, but others thought it referred to the campaign against the Communist Party. The latter view is supported by a comment in the British Communist newspaper, Morning Star, on April 30, which said that Nimeri had tried to take Sudan into the union "but the Communists and other democratic movements have opposed this since it would lead to the destruction of the Left in the Sudan". It added that Nimeri "was forced to remain outside it [the union], but as the Libyan Deputy Prime Minister Maj. Abdel Salam Jaloud said this week, he will join as soon as he has put down the troublesome Communists".

Nimeri's most recent attack on the Communists, in which he called on popular organisations to dismiss them, was the sequel to strongly-worded broadcast by the President on February 12. Speaking on Omdurman Radio, he said that the Sudanese people had been hearing "a discordant voice...which does not call for Sudan...which uses cheap clowning as a means to hinder the path of the upsurging revolution; this is the voice which calls itself 'the Sudanese Communist Party'". Listing "some of the crimes of this clique against the homeland and its unity", he said: "they consider anyone who is not in their so-called party not competent for any responsibility;... in order to attain positions of power they trample upon all values and virtues of our nation which are the virtues of free men; they openly denigrate the national talents; and they know least about the people, the country, its history, its present and its future". He accused them of campaigning against the Tripoli States Charter from which the Federation of Arab Republics has emerged and "which shakes the common enemy and the very core of world imperialism", of sabotaging industrial production and perpetrating personality cults. They were sending "poisonous, malicious, false pamphlets" to embassies and foreign governments; had incited students at Khartoum university to shout anti-revolutionary slogans, and had attacked the armed forces "with lies and fabrications, as a privileged class". The President

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went on: "These renegades have proved that they do not belong to the revolution and that their deeds are not good. They opposed the revolution before its inception; they opposed it at the moment of its inception... They have been and are going to be isolated and will be curbed... the revolution's decision to dissolve all parties, without distinction and without exception, including the so-called Sudanese Communist Party, has come as the first step on the path of national unity... Therefore, should anyone claim that a Sudanese Communist Party does exist it is your responsibility to crush him, and to crush this so-called party which that person proclaims. I know now that they have crept into their holes, but the people will find them..."

The following day, Cairo Radio broadcast a "clarification" of the speech by Major Abu al-Qasim Hashim, a member of the Sudanese Revolution Command Council. This said that the President's remarks were not directed against all Communists and that the revolution appreciated the role of those Communists who had been supporting the revolution and acting to consolidate it. The clarification was issued, said Major Hashim, to avert misunderstanding.

Nevertheless, Morning Star reported on February 17 that at least 84 Sudanese Communists had been arrested since Nimeri's attack. Reports early in April said that Nimeri was purging Communists from the Ministry of the Interior, the army and the police and that about 60 had already been dismissed. It was also claimed that the Soviet Union and China had established strong centres of influence in Sudan and that East German advisers were helping to strengthen the Sudanese security services. Clearly, the Soviet Union - which, like Peking, has praised the new Federation - has abandoned the Sudanese Communists and decided that its best prospects lie in backing the Nimeri government and continuing to develop relations at all levels. Nimeri's anti-Communist campaign has not been allowed to interfere with bilateral relations, and the President himself visited Moscow from April 14-16. Nor is there much prospect of wholehearted support for the Sudanese Communists from their Arab comrades, for while in February the Communist Parties of Jordan, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon criticised Nimeri and announced "full and firm solidarity" with the Sudanese Party, they also expressed support for the projected Federation.

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