

MAKING PEACE WHILE WAGING WAR

- A Peacemaking Effort in the Sudanese Civil War, 1965-1966 –

By

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List of Abbreviations

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
ALF	Azania Liberation Front
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
FSF	Free Southern Front
ICF	Islamic Charter Front
LFA	Land Freedom Army
NUP	National Unionist Party
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
PDP	People's Democratic Party
RTC	Round-Table Conference
SACDNU	Sudan African Closed Districts National Union
SANU	Sudan African National Union
SASU	Sudan African Socialist Union
SCA	Sudan Christian Association
SCP	Sudan Communist Party
SPLM/A	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
SUP	Sudan Unity Party
TMC	Twelve-Man Committee
UAR	United Arab Republic
UN	United Nations
UNF	United National Front
WCC	World Council of Churches

Map



CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION

In March 1965, Northern and Southern political leaders gathered in Khartoum in an attempt to solve the conflict in the South by peaceful means at a conference called the Round-Table Conference (RTC). This was the first attempt by a civilian government in the Sudan to find a political solution to the civil war.¹ The Conference resulted in the setting up of a Twelve-Man Committee (TMC), whose proposals were handed over to Prime Minister Mahgoub in June, 1966.² Some of those proposals were comparable to those of the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972, which was followed by 11 years of peace, but they were never implemented by any of the civilian governments of the 1960's.

The main focus of this thesis will be to analyse the work and results of the Round-Table Conference (1965) and the Twelve-Man Committee (1965-66). Why and how did this first attempt to find a peaceful solution to the civil war come about? What were the main issues, and how were they approached? And finally, why did this peacemaking effort fail?

The Sudanese Civil Wars

What is commonly known as 'the Sudanese civil war' is in reality two distinctly different civil wars. The first one, on which this thesis will focus, developed from a limited uprising mainly in the Equatoria Province in 1955, to gradually turning into a civil war that by the late 1960's had spread throughout the three Southern Provinces.³ The second civil war once again set the Southern region on fire by its outbreak in 1983, and lasted until a peace deal, the 'Naivasha' agreement, was signed in January 2005. By then, violent rebellions had broken out in the West as well as in the East, protesting against political neglect and economic underdevelopment. Despite the fact

¹ Gabriel R. Warburg 1992: 133.

² According to Abel Alier, the TMC report was presented to Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, and not Mahgoub. See Abel Alier 1990: 39. Although Mahgoub remained Premier until July 25, 1966, he never began planning for the implementation of the TMC recommendations, probably because of the political turmoil in that period, which eventually led to his overthrow and the coming to power of Sadiq al-Mahdi. Thus, Sadiq al-Mahdi was the Prime Minister who reacted to the TMC recommendations, while holding that office in the period of July 1966-May 1967.

³ For details on this mutiny, see pages 11-13 below.

that the Khartoum government has signed peace agreements with both Eastern and Western rebels, these conflicts still inflict huge suffering on the civilian populations in all those areas of the Sudan: The Eastern, the Western and even the Southern region are still plagued by violent conflict. These conflicts have many nuances that are significantly different. Nonetheless, they have at least one root cause in common: Negligence of the peripheries by the Central authorities, leading to underdevelopment, mistrust and suffering in the regions.⁴

In the first half of the 20th century, the Anglo-Egyptian government in the Sudan had worked by a so called “growth pole” strategy, which meant that they concentrated investments in favoured regions in order to create centres of growth.⁵ This policy was centred in the Capital Khartoum and its immediate surrounding areas, and it would become important for the way political power would be divided in the Sudan, as it laid the ground for political power based on sectarian allegiances.

‘Sectarianism’ is an ambiguous term that has been given a particular meaning in the Sudanese context. The classical Western understanding of the term ‘sect’ is commonly a closed, inverted and dogmatic group, which distances itself from the political and ideological development of the majority society. This understanding is in many ways contradictory to the meaning of the term in the context of Sudanese politics: In this context, the term ‘sectarianism’ is an expression of the religious and political movements *Ansar* and *Khatmiyya*, and the political and religious conflict that has been a constant factor in Sudanese politics ever since the colonial period.⁶

Ansar is a religious group under the leadership of the Mahdi-family. Originally the *Ansar* were the followers of Muhammad Ahmed al-Mahdi, who founded the so-called Mahdist state in the Sudan after a revolution, which he initiated in 1881.⁷ The Mahdi himself died in 1885, though the Mahdist state lasted until 1898. The Mahdi-family

⁴ For an analysis of how this underdevelopment contributed to the separatist demands in the South, see R.K. Badal 1976.

⁵ Gabriel R. Warburg 1992: 130.

⁶ The use of this term is certainly not unproblematic. Nonetheless, because of the present lack of a more accurate term, this thesis will rely on the present understanding of the term. *Ansar* and *Khatmiyya* are understood as sects. That is valid also for sufi-brotherhoods in general in the Sudan. Gabriel Warburg 2003: 143.

⁷ P.M. Holt and M.W.Daly 2000: 85.

still continues to be a leading family among the Northern Sudanese elite. The *Khatmiyya* was a sufi-brotherhood brought to the Sudan by another family that would establish itself as a significant part of the Northern elite: The Mirghanis. The Mirghanis established themselves as the leading family of this religious movement, which in the 20th Century lent its support to the first Sudanese political party, the *Ashiqqa* (literally meaning: ‘Brothers of the same father and mother’).⁸ The *Khatmiyya* supported the unionist ideas of the Egyptians, and agitated in favour of such a solution throughout the period of Anglo-Egyptian rule. Largely as a result of the colonial policies, the *Ansar* became a dominant land aristocracy in the Sudan, while the *Khatmiyya* established itself as a powerful force in the urban centres of the country.

In the South, neither sufficient educational systems nor other significant developmental projects were initiated during the colonial period.⁹ Researchers have suggested that it was the continuation of this policy after independence that was largely responsible for the growing suspicions of Southern and other regional leaders with regard to the good intentions of what they perceived as their new ‘colonizers’.¹⁰ Those social groups, who had been given power by the British, had simultaneously been given the means through which to stay in power. Systems of education, economic incentives and political structures gave them the possibility to deny any other group access to power even after independence. This effectively hindered political and economic development in the peripheries of the Sudan during the post-colonial period as, according to one author: “[...] those who framed government policy were not inclined to undertake a radical transformation of the country’s socio-economic structure.”¹¹

⁸ Ibid.: 126. *Ashiqqa* was established under the leadership of Ismail al-Azhari in 1943. In 1944, Ali al-Mirghani decided to support the party, probably in an attempt to strengthen his power at the expense of his main rival, ‘Abd al-Rahman, fearing that the Mahdi-family would attempt to establish a Mahdist monarchy in the Sudan. For more detailed information on the background, support-bases and development of the sectarian political parties, see Chapter 2 below.

⁹ The Zande Scheme, an agricultural project instigated in Western Equatoria in the late 1940s, was an exception from this, although it has been described as “badly conceived and ill-executed [...]”. Douglas H. Johnson 2003: 19.

¹⁰ See for instance Gabriel R. Warburg 1992: 130, Tim Niblock 1987: 204, and M.W.Daly in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 13.

¹¹ Tim Niblock 1987: 204.

The 'Southern Policy'

In 1898, Anglo-Egyptian forces reconquered the Sudan, and in January 1899 the British and the Egyptians signed their agreement of cooperation, the Condominium agreement, which was to last until 1 January, 1956.¹² The power-struggle between the British and the Egyptians would become significant for the development of colonial policies in the Sudan. Resulting from their need to curb Egyptian influence in the 1920s, the British implemented policies to restrict the growth of the educated class, for instance by closing down academies and preventing the building of new elementary schools.¹³ As Holt and Daly describes, the system of Indirect Rule was implemented in the Sudan as a means "to 'counteract the preponderating influence of religious leaders' and to minimize the numbers and influence of the educated urban class [...]"¹⁴ In the South, the impact of the system of Indirect Rule would become even more decisive for the future development. The British had since their reconquest of the Sudan in 1898 attempted to limit Islamic influence in the South, and by 1922, the Southern Provinces were for the first time classified as a 'Closed District'.¹⁵ In 1930 the 'Closed Districts Ordinance' was introduced, and the isolationist policy that followed from that ordinance would be important for the prospects of developing a common Sudanese national identity.

This policy, which would become popularly known as the 'Southern Policy', excluded Northern merchants from operating in the region, restricted the rights of Southerners to travel to the North to find employment, banned Islamic missionaries, and advised Southerners not to adopt Arab names or traditions. Christian missionaries were given the main responsibility of education, and English was introduced as the language of instruction in Southern schools. The British governors in the region were encouraged to learn local languages, in order to ease communication with the local population as well as make it less necessary for the natives to learn and practice

¹² Gabriel R. Warburg 1992: 62.

¹³ P.M. Holt and M.W.Daly 2000: 119. In the period of 1920-1929, not one elementary school was built in Northern Sudan. Moreover, the military school in Khartoum and a school for training Sudanese sub-*mamurs* were closed down. The British fear of an influential Sudanese educated class was strengthened by protests in 1924, instigated and organised by the so-called White Flag League.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 117.

¹⁵ This resulted from the provisions of the *Passports and Permits Ordinance*. *Ibid.*: 119. As a means of Indirect Rule the British sought to transfer local administrative powers to native authorities, but as Holt and Daly states, such authorities often did not exist in the South. In such cases, it was encouraged to 're-create' tribal organisation, in order to make the Southern societies more susceptible to the system of Indirect Rule.

Arabic. Moreover, it was considered a “Fundamental necessity” that British staff learned about beliefs and customs of the tribes in their regions.¹⁶ All in all, though, the main aim of the British administration in the Southern region was economic control and maintenance of the status quo.¹⁷

The isolation imposed on the South by the ‘Closed Districts Ordinance’ preserved the differences between Northern and Southern Sudanese, actively counteracted the development of a common national identity and as such probably contributed to what was to become a violent conflict between the two regions. As Johnson states:

“It is not necessarily the case that Northerners and Southerners would have developed a common national understanding had the policy of administrative segregation never been imposed, but the gulf of misunderstanding which separated the North and the South was all the greater as a result of that segregation.”¹⁸

This “gulf of misunderstanding” was still apparent when Northerners and Southerners met to find a solution to the Southern conflict in 1965-1966.¹⁹

The Juba Conference

In 1946, the British took the final decision about the future of unity for the Sudan, when introducing a new ‘Southern Policy’. The Juba Conference of 1947 was initiated by the British in order to allay Southern fears of future Northern domination, by presenting to the Southern Sudanese elite the new plans for a common Sudanese Legislative Assembly.²⁰ The conference took place in the town of Juba in Southern Sudan 11-12 June 1947, and was attended by British representatives, as well as Northern and Southern delegates.²¹ The main issue that the British aimed to get Sudanese approval for at the Juba Conference was Southern representation in the new

¹⁶ “1930 Memorandum On Southern Policy.” Letter from the Civil Secretary’s Office to the Governors of Upper Nile, Mongalla and Bahr al Ghazal Provinces, dated January 25th, 1930. Appendix 1 in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973.

¹⁷ Douglas H. Johnson 2003: 12.

¹⁸ Ibid.: 25.

¹⁹ The ‘Southern Policy’ was a policy with complicated background, justifications and effects, though it would be outside the scope of this thesis to go into further details about these. For more detailed information, see P.M. Holt and M.W.Daly 2000, Chapter 10: “A period of reaction: 1925-36” and Chapter 11: “The development of Sudanese Nationalism: 1937-52” in particular.

²⁰ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 65.

²¹ The complete minutes of the Juba Conference are published as appendices in both Ibid. and Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973.

National Legislative Assembly.²² The Southerners at the conference expressed doubts about their possibilities to be heard and gain real power in a common Legislative Assembly, because of their inexperience with political institutions and lower educational level as compared with the Northern educated elite. Nonetheless, at the second and last day of the conference, they agreed to consider unity with the North, although not unanimously, and, as has later been argued by Southerners, probably under the conviction that Southerners would gain new opportunities later to consider the constitutional relationship between the North and the South.²³ As will be more thoroughly accounted for elsewhere in this thesis, the Northerners at the RTC and the TMC argued that the Juba Conference had taken the final decision on the question of unity, and that Southerners at that conference had then opted for this solution.²⁴ The Southerners at the RTC and TMC unanimously agreed that the Southern region was insufficiently represented at the Juba Conference, and also that the conclusion that Southern representatives agreed to unity at that conference resulted from a wrong interpretation of the minutes of the conference.²⁵

The 1955 Torit Mutiny

The general view expressed in the majority of the research literature is that the civil war in the Sudan began by a military insurgency in the Southern town of Torit, on 18 August 1955.²⁶ Some researchers have disagreed with this, though, and claimed that from 1955 until the beginning of the 1960's, the warfare was just not intense enough to label it a civil war. Douglas H. Johnson is among these, stating that the insurgency in this early period was more of a "dormant insurgency" than a civil war.²⁷ Considering the events in this period, as well as the lack of organized and efficient rebellion, this thesis will endorse the latter conclusion, as it seems to be a more accurate description of the events.

²² Abel Alier in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973: 17.

²³ The agreements and disagreements of the Juba Conference are disputed in the literature. The Northern historian Mohamed Omer Beshir concludes that the Southerners agreed to political unity at the conference, while Abel Alier and other Southern authors have argued that this cannot be read out of the Juba Conference Minutes. See Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 66, and Abel Alier in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973: 17. This was to become a thorny issue at the Round-Table Conference in 1965, which will be accounted for in Chapter 3 below.

²⁴ See Chapter 3 below.

²⁵ See Chapter 3 below.

²⁶ See for instance Cecil Eprile 1974, Edgar O'Ballance 1977, Peter K. Bechtold 1976, Bona Malwal 1981, and Deng D. Akol Ruay 1994.

²⁷ D.H. Johnson in Christopher Clapham (ed.) 1998: 54.

In August 1955 the Khartoum officer in charge of the Southern troops wrote a letter ordering Company No.2 in Torit to leave their hometown to come to Khartoum and celebrate the evacuation of foreign troops from the country. But the Southern soldiers were suspicious towards their Northern leaders. Convinced that this was a trap, and that they would be fooled to the North only to be killed by their Northern officers in Khartoum, they refused to follow orders. They mutinied against their Northern officers in Torit, a mutiny that according to Deng D. Akol Ruay “spread like a forest fire throughout the length and breadth of Southern Sudan”.²⁸ The rebellion continued throughout the Southern region for more than two weeks, killing 336 persons. In this period, the rebels gained control of most towns in the Equatoria province. They only gave up their arms and their resistance after receiving assurances from the British that they would be guaranteed fair treatment and a thorough investigation of the accusations that had started the riots.

But the British promises were not upheld, and when law and order as well as Northern control was restored in the South, the British representative, Sir Knox Helms, left the Sudan –and the Northern military in control of the Southern rebels and their leaders. Those who had not fled the country before the return of the Northerners were either summarily executed or put through unfair trials -that were in some cases judged by the same Northerners that had been victims of the violent rebellions.²⁹ The roots of the 1960s rebel movement are to be found in those groups of people who evacuated into the bush following the surrender of the August disturbances in 1955.³⁰

Nonetheless, as Douglas H. Johnson and other researchers suggest, there was no ongoing violent conflict in Southern Sudan after 1956, until the military regime of Colonel ‘Abboud took power in 1958. R.O. Collins’ claim, which this thesis will support, is that the violent conflict only surfaced subsequent to and indeed as a result of the suppressive Arabization and Islamization policies imposed on Southerners by that regime:

²⁸ Deng D. Akol Ruay 1994: 81.

²⁹ The procedures of these trials are documented in *Report of the Commission of Enquiry: Southern Sudan Disturbances August 1955*: 95-96.

³⁰ Cecil Eprile 1974: 45, and D.H. Johnson in Christopher Clapham (ed.) 1998: 55f. For more details on the establishment and development of the Anya-Nya, see Chapter 2 below.

“General Abboud and his officers naively assumed they could achieve national integration and unity by the application of proper military discipline to impose a rigid and insensitive policy of Arabic and Islamization upon non-Muslim, non-Arab southerners. The southern reaction was that conflagration that would burn uncontrolled for another fifty years.”³¹

This claim is supported by the few studies that have been done on the establishment and development of the Anya-Nya.³² Elias Nyamlell Wakoson states that prior to 1960 the resistance movement in the South was not an active or organised movement, and even in the early years (1960-1964) the rebel movement concentrated its activities on propaganda, training and organisation, and not on active warfare.³³ H. Hayer similarly argues that the situation in Southern Sudan between 1956 and 1965 cannot be legitimately called a civil war, and that the outbreak of civil war in the South could in fact have been a result of the failure of the RTC.³⁴ In this perspective, the widespread claim that the civil war in the Sudan began in August 1955 is inaccurate, at best.

The rebel movement that eventually came to be known as the Anya-Nya was in the 1960s a fragmented movement lacking coherent strategies, ideology and command. Until Joseph Lagu in 1970 gained control and managed to lead the guerrilla in efficient warfare, clashes between different rebel factions were common, a situation that made both negotiations and implementation of any peace deal difficult in the 1960's.³⁵ Both international and national forces pressured the military regime of Colonel Jafa'ar Nimeiri to seek negotiations with Lagu, and in 1972, a peace agreement was signed. This peace accord, known as the Addis Ababa Agreement, applied religious freedom in the entire country, admitted a certain degree of self-rule in the South, and allowed the Southerners to elect their own leaders to represent them in central political institutions.

³¹ R.O. Collins 2007: 24.

³² 'Anya-Nya' originates from the Moru and Madi languages, and literally means 'snake venom' or 'incurable poison'. Mohamed Omer Beshir 1975: 53.

³³ Elias Nyamlell Wakoson in Mohamed Omer Beshir (ed.) 1984: 141-142.

³⁴ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 33.

³⁵ For more detailed information on the Anya-Nya, see Chapter 2 below.

Sources

The normal Sudanese procedure for conferences and committees like the RTC and the TMC is to produce and publicize written minutes. This was not brought about after the RTC and the TMC, although taped recordings of their meetings do exist. The most important sources for this thesis on the RTC have been documents published by the “Sudan Informazioni” News Agency.³⁶ These consist of printed copies of the introductory speeches presented by the delegates and international observers, the Schemes of Proposals and final RTC Resolutions as well as a large amount of selected newspaper cuttings from Southern and Northern newspaper and additionally some newspaper cutting from foreign press, relating to the events of the RTC. For additional understanding of the procedures and chronology of the RTC, a M.Sc. thesis written by Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih, submitted at the University of Khartoum in 1971, has been very important.³⁷ The two books written by Mohamed Omer Beshir, the Secretary General of the RTC, and their appendices, have also contributed significantly by presenting facts as well as historical and political context for the 1965-66 events. The volumes of literature written by other actors to the Sudanese civil wars have also been important for understanding the conflict and the different historical and political perceptions forming the foundation of it. The most important among these are the writings of Abel Alier³⁸, Oliver Albino³⁹, Bona Malwal⁴⁰, Oduho and Deng⁴¹ Mansour Khalid⁴² and Dunstan Wai.⁴³

³⁶ Information about the “Sudan Informazioni” News Agency has been difficult to obtain. According to Massimo Zaccaria (Pavia University), this is probably a News Agency formed by Italian missionaries. Some missionaries established such organisations subsequent to the dismissal of all foreign missionaries from Southern Sudan in 1962. As the missionaries in Northern Sudan were allowed to stay in the country, they had to be careful not to reveal to the Sudanese authorities that they were continuing their activities counteracting Arab-Islamic influence in Southern Sudan. Thus, “News Agencies” and other organisations were formed, so that such activities could continue without being traceable back to their ‘mother-organisations’. Personal communication with Massimo Zaccaria, 11. May 2007.

³⁷ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum) I owe great thanks to Professor Fadwa Taha, University of Khartoum, for spending time and efforts in bringing this thesis from Khartoum to Bergen for me.

³⁸ Abel Alier in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973, and Abel Alier 1990.

³⁹ Oliver Albino 1970.

⁴⁰ Bona Malwal 1981.

⁴¹ Joseph Oduho and William Deng 1963.

⁴² Mansour Khalid 2003. Mansour Khalid was not an actor in the RTC or TMC, though an important Southern official in the Nimeiri period (1969-1983), when he worked as foreign minister in the periods of 1971-1975 and 1977-1979. He later left Khartoum and joined the SPLM/SPLA.

⁴³ Dunstan M. Wai in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973, and Dunstan M. Wai 1981.

For the sources on the TMC, I am greatly indebted to Professor Robert O. Collins and the staff at the Archives & Special Collections at the University of Durham. The documents and materials that Professor Collins donated to the Durham University Archives & Special Collections have been the main foundation of Chapter 4 of this thesis. These consist mainly of Collins' notes to the recorded minutes of the TMC meetings, as well as proposals by its delegates, and have been crucial to this project.⁴⁴ In addition, Salih's thesis has contributed greatly to the understanding of the continuity and details of the discussions and negotiations.⁴⁵

For the Arabic definite article this thesis will consistently use the form al-. Exceptions has been made when a person's own preference have been known to me, as, for instance, in the case of Abdelwahhab el-Affendi.

Literature

No thorough in-dept analysis has been done on the RTC and the TMC. Most writers only briefly account for the main views presented by the two sides at the RTC, and most barely mention the TMC. It has been widely accepted that the initiative was a positive contribution towards a resolution of the conflict in Southern Sudan, as the combatants for the first time met face to face and were given the opportunity to express their different views on the causes and possible solutions to the conflict.⁴⁶ This probably increased the understanding of the causes of the conflict, abroad as well as inside the Sudan. Nonetheless, it has also been claimed that its failure in effect sharpened the conflict as it led to disillusion in the Southern society and consequently motivated for mass recruitment to the rebel movement.⁴⁷ Indeed, violence increased drastically in the six years following this peacemaking initiative (1966-1972), and it is only after 1965 that the rebel movement can be legitimately called a guerrilla.⁴⁸ Thus, the efforts that were supposed to reach a constructive solution that could enable the South and the North to live in mutual cooperation rather than conflict had failed miserably. It is hoped that this study will find a more extensive explanation than those

⁴⁴ R.O. Collins' Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections' Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8.

⁴⁵ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum).

⁴⁶ See for instance Mohamed Omer Beshir 1975: 2, and Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 105.

⁴⁷ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 33.

⁴⁸ See Chapter 2 below.

that have been given so far, to why the RTC and the TMC failed to conclude this conflict, which was gradually turning into a civil war.

The opinions expressed in the literature on this topic can be divided in three main categories: Firstly, those that mainly blames one party to the conflict, either the Northerners or the Southerners, for the failure. Secondly, those claiming that the reason for the failure was the timing of this peacemaking effort: That the time was unsuitable for a negotiated peace, as the main actors were not sufficiently motivated to make the necessary compromises. In the third category we find authors that conclude that the failure of the RTC/TMC effort was linked to the implementation phase: Either that it was the failure to agree on implementable solutions to the key issues or that it was the lack of implementation of the terms that were finally agreed upon that led to continuation of violence after the RTC/TMC.

Unsurprisingly, Southern and Northern Sudanese authors are the major contributors to the first category. Abel Alier, an educated Southerner who participated at the RTC and TMC as a leading member of the party Southern Front, has written extensively on the conflict in Southern Sudan.⁴⁹ In his opinion the Northerners were uninterested in a solution based on compromise, as their major goal was to maintain their dominant position in the Sudanese society. Oliver Albino, another Southern representative to the RTC, similarly concludes that the Northerners deliberately spoiled these negotiations, refusing to admit to the Southerners their legitimate right to self-determination: “The North [...] tends to pitch its refusal on the assumption that if you give anything to the needy you only run the risk of increasing his demands. All efforts are therefore directed towards frustrating any demands from the South.”⁵⁰ Deng D. Akol Ruay, a member of the movement that organised the Southern rebels throughout the second civil war, the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), joins Alier and Albino in their analyses. Ruay claims that the Northern unwillingness to compromise is proven by their failure to produce a second Scheme of proposals to

⁴⁹ See Abel Alier in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973, for a general introduction to his views on the conflict and its historical aspects. Abel Alier 1990 accounts more specifically for his opinion about the discussions of the RTC and TMC, as well as the more successful Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972, of which he also was a main contributor. For more details about the Southern Front, see Chapter 2 below.

⁵⁰ Oliver Albino 1970: 130.

the RTC.⁵¹ He states that this was the main factor that led to the deadlock at the RTC, and consequently the Northerners were to blame for the failure of the conference to reach a solution. Clement Mboro, a respected Southern politician who represented the South at both the Juba Conference of 1947 and the RTC, was of the opinion that the failure to reach a political solution for the conflict was that the Northerners did not respect democratic principles. For instance, the Northerners kept insisting that the Central government should appoint the Head Executive of the South.⁵² Mboro states that had the Northerners agreed to allow the Southerners to elect their own leaders without interference from Khartoum, an agreement would have been reached “much earlier.”⁵³

Most prominent among the Northern authors on this topic is Mohamed Omer Beshir, a respected historian who knew the conflict intimately and worked as the Secretary General of the RTC. Beshir complains that Northern parties were not fully committed to the RTC, as they were busy preparing for the April 1965 elections.⁵⁴ He is particularly critical towards the Islamist segment of Northern politicians, when claiming that their insistence on an Islamic state alienated the Southerners and in effect confirmed their preconceived hostility towards the North. While admitting that the personal manoeuvring among Northern politicians and the resulting political instability created unfavourable conditions for a peace agreement in the 1960s, Beshir nonetheless blames the Southern fragmentation and lack of negotiating skills for the failure of this peacemaking effort: “Inside the Conference they were not only divided but also unable to recognise that there was a sincere desire on the part of the North to reach an honourable solution which would meet most, if not all, of their aspirations [...]”⁵⁵ He also argues that external forces intervened in the conflict, a factor that eventually fuelled it into an unmanageable civil war.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Deng D. Akol Ruay 1994: 115 and 119.

⁵² Chapter 4 below accounts for the disagreement on this issue that persisted between Southerners and Northerners on the eve of the work of the TMC.

⁵³ Clement Mboro, as quoted in Elias Nyamlell Wakoson in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 40.

⁵⁴ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 96.

⁵⁵ Ibid.: 94.

⁵⁶ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1975: 43.

The Southerner R.K. Badal, commenting on the RTC only briefly and in comparison with the successful Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972, seems to agree with Beshir that the main obstacle to the RTC was the fragmented and inexperienced Southern elite, when concluding: “[...] while the North showed the will, the South did not have the capacity to negotiate.”⁵⁷

Peter K. Bechtold is a proponent of a view that can be placed into the second category of analysis. Although not suspecting the politicians to be insincere, he states that the RTC was convened at a time when the main focus of the parties, the Northerners especially, were not on finding an applicable solution to the conflict in the South. “[...] no observer could avoid the impression that the parties failed to address themselves to any realistic analysis of, or solutions to, the problem at hand”, Bechtold states.⁵⁸ He explains this by the political confusion at the time, as well as the factor also pointed to by Beshir, namely that the Northern politicians would not abstain from exploiting this unique opportunity to position themselves for the planned elections. This analysis is not objected to by the authors in the third category, though they tend to place more significance for the failure of this peacemaking effort on its implementation phase.

In the third category of explanations, we find authors with a variety of backgrounds. The Southerner Dunstan Wai is among these, claiming that although both parties to the conflict agreed that devolution of power was needed to solve the conflict, it was the disagreement on the degree of devolution, and what powers to transfer to the region, that led the RTC into its final deadlock.⁵⁹ According to Wai, the RTC and the TMC made important achievements that would prove significant in the future, and thus, it was the unwillingness to implement the TMC recommendations among the responsible politicians that led to the failure to reach a peaceful solution: “In essence, the potential achievements were eradicated by the lack of implementation of the conference recommendations.”⁶⁰ Wakoson agrees with Wai in this analysis, and states that fear and suspicion towards the Northern elite dominated the mind-set of the educated Southerners, and prevented them from presenting implementable proposals. Wakoson takes this one step further, though, and claims that the presence of

⁵⁷ R.K. Badal 1976: 469.

⁵⁸ Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 227-228.

⁵⁹ Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 101.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*: 105.

mediators might have been helpful in convincing the parties to commit themselves to the process: “However, the absence of a third party to mediate between southerners and northerners coupled with a lack of committed and unified leadership on both sides also contributed to the failure of the conference”.⁶¹ Wakoson gives additional weight to the argument that the timing of the RTC/TMC process was crucial to its failure, when he points to the fact that many of the TMC recommendations were actually implemented by President Nimeiri as part of the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972.

The American historian R.O. Collins also concludes that the implementation phase was the main spoiler to the RTC: “It failed, not so much by what took place during its deliberations nor by its resolutions but by subsequent events”, he states.⁶² He substantiates this claim by the facts that the RTC resolutions were never implemented, the conference was never reconvened as originally agreed to, and the agreement on procedure of appointments of members to the TMC was violated. Moreover, he states that the decision to go through with the plans to hold elections in the North only in April 1965 was the last nail in the coffin for finding a political solution to the conflict in the 1960s: As the forces that came to power subsequent to those elections were hostile to the South, and unrelenting in their denunciation of the ‘terrorists’ in the rebel movement, the probability for a compromise solution was from then on diminishing.⁶³ Ahmad Alawad Sikainga agrees with R.O. Collins in this analysis, and states that Mahgoub’s plan for ending the warfare in the South, which he proclaimed in June 1966, “[...] represented a complete departure from the recommendations of the Round-Table Conference.”⁶⁴ Moreover, his predecessor Sadiq al-Mahdi added to this when he refused to reconvene the RTC and ignored the recommendations of the TMC.⁶⁵

Theoretical Approach: How civil wars end - or why they do not

As a general observation, peacemaking processes can be divided into 3 phases: An initiating phase (finding the ripe time to initiate negotiations), a negotiating phase and

⁶¹ Elias Nyamlell Wakoson in Mohamed Omer Beshir (ed.) 1984: 177.

⁶² R.O. Collins in R.O. Collins (ed.) 2005: 220.

⁶³ For more information on this government and its policies, see Chapter 4 below.

⁶⁴ Ahmad Alawad Sikainga in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 83.

⁶⁵ For details on these developments, see Chapters 3 and 4 below.

an implementation phase.⁶⁶ Traditionally, the first two have been considered the most crucial for succeeding, but Barbara Walter argues that although these steps are indeed important, the implementing phase is more difficult and crucial to the possibility to succeed than previously realised. Walter divides the traditional analyses that have explained the successful settlement of civil wars in two categories of explanations.

The first category of explanations states that the crucial point in reaching a lasting settlement, is finding the ripe time for negotiation: When the economic, military or political conditions are likely to convince the combatants that a negotiated settlement is the most favourable option, then reaching a successful settlement is likely. The main factors that have been perceived as affecting the ‘ripeness’ of a given situation have been the costs of war, military stalemate and the degree and effectiveness of democratic institutions.⁶⁷ Generally, it has been perceived as more likely that the combatants will choose negotiations before continued warfare if the costs of war are perceived too high to continue, if the combatants find themselves in a military stalemate where a military solution seems unlikely and if democratic institutions are developed to such a degree that popular opinion has an actual effect on the power of their leaders. All these factors are relevant to the study of the Sudanese civil war and the RTC/TMC. However, as this thesis will show, none of them are sufficient to fully explain the failure of the negotiations.

The costs of war are commonly measured by two main elements: The duration of the war, and the number of war-related deaths.⁶⁸ Walter’s study finds that these factors have a considerable effect on combatant’s decision to initial negotiations. Additionally, a military stalemate is perceived as crucial in this phase because it normally results in a realisation by the combatants that their military strength are somewhat alike, which, in turn, will often convince them that they will be equal negotiating partners in a peacemaking process.⁶⁹ Moreover, Walter’s extensive study of post-1940 civil wars concludes that the consideration that democratic institutions and their effectiveness are significant for the likeliness of combatants to enter

⁶⁶ Barbara Walter 2002: 19.

⁶⁷ Ibid.: 8-11. Walter labels these “Expected utility choice theorists” and mentions the theories of Donald Wittman, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, and T. David Mason and Patrick J. Fett in this respect.

⁶⁸ Ibid.: 75.

⁶⁹ Ibid.: 76 and 81.

negotiations is not valid as a general rule.⁷⁰ This thesis will argue that the Sudanese civil wars, including the one under examination in this study, have been largely influenced by the sectarian basis of Sudanese politics, which, despite their root in a democratic system have proven unable to address the recurring conflicts in the peripheries of the country efficiently.

The second category of theories argues that successful settlement is likely if the combatants have been able to agree to a compromise that solves the root causes of the conflict.⁷¹ Such explanations moves the focus away from the initiating phase onto the negotiating phase of the peacemaking process, and argues that although the conditions that enables the combatants to meet each other at the negotiating tables are important, the negotiation process itself must solve the core issues behind the conflict if the result is to be a lasting peace. Three main factors are seen as crucial in complicating this process: To which extent the contested issues relate to questions of identity, the divisibility of the stakes (to which degree the demands of the combatants are intertwined into each other), and the presence and role of mediators. The issue of identity in particular is especially linked to the added impenetrability of ethnic civil wars as compared to civil wars that do not contain ethnic elements. This is usually linked to the emotional character of identity-issues; as such complex questions cannot be solved through material or other rational bargaining, ethnically-based conflicts that have developed into civil wars are much less likely to be successfully solved by peaceful means.⁷² As for the divisibility of the stakes, it is commonly argued that the more dividable the ventures of a conflict are, the more likely it is that the parties will unite on conditions for a lasting peace agreement. Lastly, it is normally expected that the presence of mediators are directly linked to the success of a peacemaking effort; without mediators, the chances of successful settlement are slim. In August 1965, the Ghanaian President offered to negotiate between the Sudanese combatants.⁷³ This was rejected by the Sudanese government, though, as it viewed the problem as an internal

⁷⁰ Ibid.: 75. Walter exemplifies this by stating that the combatants of the civil wars in Costa Rica, Peru and the Philippines were no more likely to negotiate their conflicts than those in the less democratic regimes of Cuba, Burma or Iran.

⁷¹ Ibid.: 11-15. Walter refers in this respect to the theories presented by Robert Randle, Fred C. Ikle, Glenn Snyder and Paul Diesing, and James D. Fearon.

⁷² This is discussed in more detail below in the section on Stuart J. Kaufman's theory on peacemaking efforts in ethnic civil wars (see pages 23-28 below).

⁷³ Oliver Albino 1970: 62-63. See also Hizkias Assefa 1987: 66-67.

one, that would not need external interference. This thesis will argue that such reluctance to include external mediation in the peacemaking process was a major obstacle to its success.

The ‘Credible Commitment Theory’

The main argument Walter makes by her ‘Credible commitment theory’ of civil war resolution is that although the initiating and negotiating phases are crucially important for successful peacemaking these are not the main obstacles for achieving a lasting result: “In the end, however, the two most important factors in convincing combatants to both sign and implement peace settlements are third-party security guarantees and power-sharing pacts. Only then do we get peace.”⁷⁴ The main reason that such resolution efforts fail, she argues, is the basic problem of distrust between the parties of civil wars. Her basis for claiming this is that the phase where most peace processes break down is not the initiating or the negotiating phase, but the practical implementing phase.⁷⁵ This results from the difficulties inflicted on this phase by the lack of trust between the parties.

The implementing phase of a peace agreement inevitably puts both parties in a vulnerable situation, where they are required to give practical concessions that make them gradually weaker, as a result of, for instance, the integration of their forces into common military and administrative institutions. During this process, the danger of a surprise attack is closely felt by both parties, and: “Thus, even under the very best conditions – when combatants have initiated negotiations and signed a mutually agreeable treaty – the desire for peace clashes with the realities of implementation, and groups frequently choose the safer, more certain option of war.”⁷⁶

The fact that this phase is characterized in such a way by the impending danger that the parties would return to war, a mutually agreeable and signed agreement between the two warring parties will generally not be sufficient to make both stick to it, without a muscular third party. In fact, Walter claims that the third party in order to

⁷⁴ Barbara Walter 2002: 17.

⁷⁵ According to Walter’s statistics, 62% of all civil war negotiations between 1942 and 1992 led to a signed agreement, and 43% of these were never implemented. See *Ibid.*: 6.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*: 6.

secure commitment by the combatants should prove its own commitment by following up the situation throughout the peacemaking process: “The more committed a third party appears, the more likely combatants are to implement the military terms of a settlement and demobilize. Conversely, the less certain they are about a third party’s commitment, the more likely they are to cheat.”⁷⁷ Hence, lack of trust between the parties in civil wars gives mediators a crucial role: It is vital that a strong third party put pressure on the combatants to stick to the bargain, as well as enable them to provide credible guarantees to each other that they will not exploit the fragile and difficult implementation phase. This option of verifying the credibility of the parties through a committed and muscular mediator is what Walter calls the ‘credible commitment theory’ of civil war resolution. Her crucial argument is that it is of severe importance that the combatants are enabled to prove credible commitment to the process of implementation, and that this becomes more likely when involving a strong third party. Thus, Walter’s theory concludes that the failures of resolution efforts often results from the lack of belief in the possibility of implementation of an agreement. Indeed, Abel Alier, member of the Southern Front and one of the main Southern negotiators during the RTC and the TMC, has claimed that even in the midst of those negotiations, neither of the parties believed that they would lead to any implementable solution.⁷⁸

While discussing the crucial implementing phase of peacemaking processes, this theory puts a lot of weight on the distrust between the combatants, and thus touches upon the psychological aspects that is analysed further by Kaufman’s theory of the ‘symbolic politics trap’, which will be discussed in the following.

The ‘Symbolic Politics Trap’

While Barbara Walter discusses civil wars in general, Stuart J. Kaufman focuses especially on ethnic civil wars, and analyses the particular problems that ethnic factors such as religion, culture and language diversity inflicts on civil conflicts.⁷⁹ According to Kaufman’s definition, ethnic war “is a war where the key issues at stake

⁷⁷ Ibid.: 41.

⁷⁸ Abel Alier 1990: 32.

⁷⁹ Stuart J. Kaufman 2006. All quotes in the following section are taken from this article unless else is stated.

–that is, the express reason political power is being contested –involve either ethnic markers such as language or religion or the status of ethnic groups themselves. A war is organized armed combat between at least two belligerent sides in which at least one thousand people is being killed.”⁸⁰ In the Sudanese civil wars, all those issues that Kaufman labels ‘ethnic markers’ were indeed contested. Although the existence of racial and ethnic conflict was strictly denied by the Northerners, Southern hostility and violence was claimed to be founded in systematic repression of Southern Sudanese cultures, languages and religions, and deliberate attempts to enforce the Arab-Islamic identity of the North on the population of the South.⁸¹

One important aspect of conflict resolution pointed to in his article “Escaping the Symbolic Politics Trap: Reconciliation initiatives and Conflict Resolution in Ethnic Wars”, is that so far, no effective method for solving ethnic civil wars have been found. This is proved by the sad statistics for this type of conflicts: When counting out those that were solved through military victory, which is a morally unacceptable solution as it inflicts huge suffering, mass killing or other serious oppression, very few conflicts of this sort have in fact been solved. While the total number of ethnic conflicts worldwide in 1999 were 59,⁸² Kaufman’s “complete list” of successfully concluded ones after 1945 contains only six conflicts: Zimbabwe (1984), South Africa (1993-94), Niger (1995), Ghana (1996), Northern Ireland (1998), and East Timor (1999). Even this list is incorrect, the author admits, since all are still plagued by recurring violence.

Kaufman attributes the low success-rate of conventional peacemaking in ethnic civil wars to the rationality approach that these have traditionally conducted. Actors of ethnic conflicts are seen as rational actors, whose main motives for waging war are material interests that have to be solved through compromise. When concentrating on material grievances and thus focusing on issues like political power, security or resources, traditional peacemaking have neglected those root causes that lay behind the mere practical grievances of the parties. Important features to address when searching for the roots of such conflicts are to be found in emotional factors: The

⁸⁰ Stuart J. Kaufman 2001: 17.

⁸¹ See Chapters 2 and 3 below for a more detailed presentation of the background and perceptions of the different Southern and Northern political parties.

⁸² According to a counting by Ted Robert Gurr 2000 referred to in Stuart J. Kaufman 2006: 203.

symbolic rhetoric that parties to ethnic conflicts utilize in order to form ethno-religious identities and hostile images of the enemy form an important component of ethnic civil wars.

The ‘symbolic politics trap’ is Kaufman’s theoretical construction, instrumental in illustrating how political agitation that exploits ethnic symbols and builds hostile images of out-groups effectively are driving forces in ethnic conflicts.⁸³ Such popular emotions are utilized in order to legitimise the struggle and sacrifices, and are as such an important element of successful civil warfare. While this tactic is effective in the heat of war, it is likely to direct the leader into the so-called ‘symbolic politics trap’: Such mass-emotions are difficult to control, and constructs popular ambitions that ‘trap’ the leaders in a negative spiral of hostile enemy images and irreversible demands. While moderation is needed when compromises are to be made, conventional negotiations addressing issues like re-distribution of land-rights and political and institutional power-sharing, need to add extensive reconciliation processes in order to create popular support for the peace-initiative. Because ethnic civil wars are basically conflicts between entire ethnic groups, and not merely conflicts between political or military leaders, measures directed to loosen strict and hostile ethnic identities while simultaneously promoting reconciliation on all levels of society are required for peace-initiatives to succeed. Dissolving hostile mass-feelings is a difficult task that has not been sufficiently emphasized when attempting to end ethnic conflicts through conventional peacemaking. Hence, according to Kaufman, this may well be the key to why such peacemaking has so far been largely ineffective.

The peacemaking approach suggested by Kaufmann to be added to the traditional strategy of civil war resolution is thus a four-phase strategy aiming to reconcile the parties to ethnic conflicts as part of a comprehensive peace process. Firstly, he claims that timing the initiative according to the motivation of the warring parties is crucial. As long as any party to a conflict is convinced that there is more to gain from war than from peace, that actor is probable to spoil the initiative and obstruct the peace process. Thus, it is important to consider the situation on the ground and how it affects the motivation of the combatants, before a peacemaking effort is initiated, and

⁸³ For a detailed introduction to and discussion of this theory, see Stuart J. Kaufman 2001.

Kaufman gives one crucial guide-line to finding the ripe time: “Once the balance of power favors those who want peace, the time is right for a ceasefire.” When time is ripe, pre-negotiations and possibly informal ‘Track II-talks’ are necessary, Kaufman claims. At this stage the role of the mediators is vital, as the aim of this process is to bring together the opposing parties to the conflict to enable them to “(...) replace their mythical beliefs about the other side with better information and replace their hostility and fear with enough understanding to make a compromise peace look attractive and attainable”. As this thesis will argue, this was a major obstacle to the RTC and TMC processes, where the role of external mediators were deliberately diminished, as the parties to the conflict (the Northerners especially) insisted on the national character of the conflict, and the necessity of an internal solution to the problem.

The second phase that Kaufman recommends focuses on “Negotiation and Political De-Escalation”. For this phase, Kaufmann suggests a range of efforts, directed to humanizing information-campaigns, educating all segments of the population on the human sides to the conflict in order to neutralize antagonistic attitudes. This phase is dependent on committing the leaders to publicly announce their commitment to reconciliation. Hence, key leaders on both sides should express understanding of the sufferings of their counterpart, and acknowledge their own partial responsibility for them. Such acknowledgements should be made a condition for continuation of the negotiations, Kaufman states, because the ability of the leaders to implement a deal is subject to doubt if they are unable to give such concessions. “At a minimum, this means prohibition against hate speech by leaders, and the media they control, when addressing their own populations”, he says. This is related to what Kaufman claims is the most important issue at this stage: That the leaders on both sides develop tools for obtaining support among their constituencies without turning to emotional nationalist appeals. As this thesis will show, this was not upheld by the delegates at the RTC/TMC. Both Hasan al-Turabi (ICF) and Gordon Muortat (Southern Front) publicly expressed doubts about the work of the TMC before the committee had finished its work. Kaufman also states that it is important to include all political groups in the peacemaking process, in order to prevent hard-liners and extremists from discouraging the negotiations and blocking ratification and implementation of the deal.

The third phase includes efforts to prepare the public for the implementation and conclusion of the deal. This should be done by diverse efforts directed towards middle-range and grass-root leaders as well as the masses. Major speeches by leaders, cultural ceremonies and other public relations efforts actively promoting the positive effects of the peace deal should be central components. Continuation of the efforts to counteract opposition to the settlement is crucial in this stage, and Kaufman suggests that veterans and émigré groups should be particularly enhanced to inform the public of the realities of the war. Fostering reconciliation among the masses is crucial, as these efforts should ideally culminate in some sort of a formal ratification, for instance elections or a referendum: “A successful vote can then be used to legitimate implementation as carrying out the explicit will of the people: charges of betrayal cannot then as easily stick.”

The last phase of this process includes implementation of the deal. When referring to other research that has been done on this difficult and dangerous phase, Kaufman states that “Key factors that have been identified include supportive international interventions, well-designed and inclusive settlement agreements, and quick economic benefits that give ordinary people a tangible stake in peace.” Hostile emotions still has to be counteracted, as there is a tendency that hardliners continue their attempts to spoil peace agreements by reinforcing the hostile mass-emotions that used to legitimate the war in the eyes of the masses. Thus, a key factor in this phase is to make sure that the leaders do not return to their previous rhetoric of symbolic politics. This necessitates that the importance of group identities are altered and that feelings of group victimization are reduced, by downplaying the importance of the ‘chosen traumas’ that both the identity of the in-group and hostility toward the out-group are built upon. Measures that have given positive effects in this respect in the past are truth commissions and revision of school curricula. Practical measures to ensure cooperation between the previously hostile societies are also important, to make sure that hostile feelings are not merely temporarily repressed:

“[...] the previous attitudes of hostility and fear cannot simply be excised; they must be replaced or at least balanced by some more positive feelings. It is also necessary practically, since failure to cooperate on issues of mutual concern will inevitably engender hostility which might contribute to re-igniting the conflict.”

One final point that Kaufman makes is particularly relevant to the peacemaking effort that this thesis will analyse: An effective cease-fire has proven crucial to reconciliation and successful implementation of peace agreements. The main cause of this is believed to be that violence breeds hostility, and thus counteracts reconciliation initiatives, no matter how extensive. Continued violence is thus a major obstacle to any peacemaking process.

This thesis will analyse the Round-Table Conference and the Twelve-Man Committee in the light of these theoretical frameworks. By accounting for the main actors and the historical and political context of these negotiations, as well as the main issues that were approached and how they were resolved, this thesis will add to the present research status by providing an extensive explanation to why the Round-Table Conference and the Twelve-Man Committee failed.

CHAPTER 2: POLITICAL CONTEXT AND THE ACTORS OF THE RTC/TMC PROCESS

After a range of debates concerning the status of the Southern region, the Northern political leadership gave in to Southern demands in 1955, and promised to consider federation for the South after independence. This promise became the key reason for the Southern politicians to vote in favour of independence, and subsequently the major formal grievance of Southern politicians in their struggle for self-determination during the next 17 years. This chapter will give a brief historical introduction to the political development in post-independent Sudan, before it examines how the main actors in Sudanese politics viewed the North-South conflict; its root causes and possible solutions.

From Parliamentary rule to the ‘Abboud regime

During the first parliamentary period (1953-1958) Southern Sudanese politicians who attempted to bring up the special needs of the South were marginalised by their Northern colleagues, and later, Khartoum governments consistently neglected demands of a federated status for the South.⁸⁴ Southern Sudanese politicians who supported the continuation of the status quo, on the other hand, were rewarded for their efforts to preserve a united Sudan.⁸⁵ The policy that was led by the Khartoum governments between 1955 and 1969 was consistently one of development in the North and central areas, and neglect of the peripheries. The British had produced a range of plans for the development of the Southern region before they left the Sudan in 1956. The Northern governments that took power after independence, though, never implemented them, and some of them were indeed realized, but in the North rather than in the South.⁸⁶ As R.O. Collins states; “When the British left the Sudan in 1956 there were numerous schemes for developing the Southern Sudan. Like

⁸⁴ For instance, both Bullen Alier and Buth Diu were dismissed from the Azhari government in early 1956 because of their opposition to Azhari’s policy towards the South.

⁸⁵ Bechtold states that some Southerners were paid by Northerners to support their parties after the 1953 and 1958 elections. See Bechtold 1976: 178. The practice of attempting to increase the influence of unionist Southerners continued at the RTC in 1965, when the Northern parties threatened to boycott the conference if unionist Southerners were not allowed to attend. See pages 46-48 below.

⁸⁶ B. Yongo-Bure in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 53.

education, however, most of these projects had been postponed or abandoned in favor of economic undertakings in the North.”⁸⁷

According to one author, all the large political forces in the North, with the exception of the Communist Party, agreed that an Islamic constitution was needed and wanted, and “regarded the fast Arabization and Islamization of the South as one of their most significant missions.”⁸⁸ In spite of this unison attitude, their personal disagreements were more apparent than their political unanimity, and personal rivalries and power struggles would tear the first parliamentary experiment in Sudan apart. The Umma party and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) won the 1958 elections, but the coalition was not strong enough, and the actors did not possess the needed spirit of statesmanship, to stabilize the country. The struggles over constitutional issues, as well as a deteriorating economy and the civil war in the South, led to the coming to power of the military in 1958, seemingly on the invitation of the Umma party leader, Abdallah Khalil.⁸⁹

Brigadier General Ibrahim ‘Abboud did not manage to improve the economy of the country, and both his political and economic reforms were disapproved of by the people.⁹⁰ In the South, a policy aimed at fostering national integration and unity was implemented: Arabization and Islamization measures were implemented throughout the Southern region, intending to assimilate native cultures and traditions to Arabic and Islamic ones that had previously been successful in integrating the diverse cultures of the North. For instance, Arabic was introduced as language of education in the South, although in Northern secondary schools English remained the medium of instruction until 1967.⁹¹ It has been claimed that although this policy may seem arrogant and insensitive, it should be understood as quite natural and rational steps in the context of the newly independent Sudan. As Bechtold argues:

“[...] fairness demands that this issue is placed into its proper historical and cultural context by examining the premises of northern thinking. [...] in 1954 an international commission on secondary education, with no northern or southern Sudanese members, had recommended that Arabic replace English and that all mission and private schools be taken over by the government. The Abboud regime

⁸⁷ R.O. Collins, as quoted in Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 209.

⁸⁸ Gabriel R. Warburg 1992: 132.

⁸⁹ M.W.Daly in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 13.

⁹⁰ Ibid.: 14.

⁹¹ Douglas H. Johnson 2003: 30.

merely took this advice at face value and proceeded [sic] to implement it, just as it would any other program.”⁹²

However, the policies were a complete failure, and the discontent in the South soon developed into a violent insurgency. The military regime tightened its grip, and in 1963-64 the region drifted into increased violence and disorder.

The October Revolution

The government had only just lifted a ban on public discussion groups, in an attempt to relieve the pressure put upon them by the increasing unrest and violence in the South, when flaming speeches over the civil war sparked the October Revolution of 1964. It all began at a student meeting in Khartoum, where an emotional speech criticised the situation in the South, and claimed that the government was responsible for the situation. The speech stirred up anger towards the regime among the audience. The reactions were disturbing to the government, which withdrew its permission for public discussion groups, in an attempt to silence the criticism. But it was too late, and large groups of protesting students gathered in Khartoum on 21 October. It came to clashes with the police, and in a shooting episode one student were hit by a police bullet and killed. The government tried to explain the tragic event by a number of unfortunate circumstances, for instance that senior staff in the police and political administration were not present, and thus inexperienced personnel took important decisions.⁹³ But the Sudanese public rendered the excuses unacceptable, and the following day approximately 30,000 people joined the funeral procession for the dead student. Protests and large demonstrations arose in the week that followed, and general strikes were called to oust the military regime. The regime was overthrown, and succeeded by a transitional government, mainly consisting of representatives from the key groups that had taken part in and supported the Revolution. These forces were highly independent from the traditional sectarian parties, and consisted largely of leftist groups like workers unions and students.⁹⁴

⁹² Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 208.

⁹³ Ibid.: 211-212.

⁹⁴ See Chapter 3 below for details on these events.

Consequences of the October Revolution

Since the civil war was such an important factor in the overthrow of ‘Abboud and his military regime, it was impossible for the government that followed not to take the problem seriously. Sirr al-Khatim Khalifa was appointed Prime Minister, and he immediately started forming strategies for handling the civil war. Its central role in the October Revolution led to the acknowledgement among large sections of the Northern population that the conflict should be treated as a political problem. Prime Minister Khalifa was clear on his view that a solution had to be found, and that politics was the way through which to come to it. The Round-Table Conference was a direct result of this acknowledgement.

Clement Mboro, former deputy Governor of Darfur, had been selected to work as Minister of Interior in the transitional government of Prime Minister Khalifa, and already 12 November, 1964 Mboro managed to convince the Anya-Nya to uphold a cease-fire while he and the Prime Minister visited the South on a so-called “fact-finding tour”.⁹⁵ The legitimacy of the transitional government was essentially founded on their commitment to finding a peaceful solution to the situation in the South, as opposed to the failed, violent policies of ‘Abboud. O’Ballance claims that the Khalifa government mistakenly believed that the insurgents basically had taken up arms to fight the ‘Abboud regime, and that they therefore would cease the violence when the new government showed its willingness to politically solve their grievances. If that was the case, the cease-fire must have been a disappointment to Khalifa and his government. Anya-Nya fighters exploited this opportunity to enter the towns, where they for the first time in years were allowed to move about freely. There, they intimidated civilians and attempted to recruit new ‘freedom fighters’. The response of the army to these activities varied greatly between the regions. In some towns, the army passively allowed those activities, whereas in other towns they were violently reacted to, and clashes occurred. The civilian population suffered any way.

Violence spread even to Khartoum, when Mboro’s arrival from the government’s “fact-finding tour” was delayed and rumours occurred that he had been assassinated. Unrest spread among the Southern population, and the situation developed into a riot.

⁹⁵ Edgar O’Ballance 1977: 68. O’Ballance states that this cease-fire “did not last long and was never properly enforced”.

Serious clashes between Southerners and Northerners arose in the streets of Khartoum, and not until the following day did the police manage to calm down the disturbances, which resulted in 14 people killed and more than 400 injured.⁹⁶

As an answer to the increased violence, the transitional government increased its military presence in the South.⁹⁷ Committed to its promises of seeking a peaceful solution to the conflict, the transitional government found itself in a difficult situation: While wanting to demonstrate its willingness to stick to the cease-fire, it simultaneously felt the pressure of the increased Anya-Nya activities. Additionally, Northern public opinion was intolerant of a “soft” approach to the problem. In January, 1965 both the Teaching Staff at the University of Khartoum and the National Front Congress publicly expressed worries that a one-sided cease-fire would weaken the government in the South and consequently strengthen the Anya-Nya.⁹⁸

The Anya-Nya

Although the first civil war in Southern Sudan was not a direct continuation of the 1955 rebellion, some of the key initiators of the Anya-Nya were survivors from that uprising.⁹⁹ Many scholars have stated that the Anya-Nya movement was formed in 1963.¹⁰⁰ With the exception of the 1955 mutiny, there was little active military resistance in the South before 1963, and even throughout the 1960's it would be an overstatement to label it a guerrilla movement, due to its lack of organization and structure.¹⁰¹ Prior to 1965 it suffered from scarcity of finances and modern weapons, a situation that may have contributed to the fragmentation of the movement. As it proved impossible to finance and organise the movement through one central command, it was decided to organise the factions geographically, to allow each faction to take advantage of local knowledge and sympathies among the civilian

⁹⁶ Ibid.: 69.

⁹⁷ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 78.

⁹⁸ According to Ibid.: 79, a statement by the National Front Congress 19 January, 1965 underlined that the cease-fire “should not mean mere allowance for the mutineers to engage in further unlawful activities”. Stating a similar stance the Sudanese teaching staff at the University of Khartoum dated 23 January, 1965 said in a public announcement that the government “should not hesitate to take whatever measures to be found suitable for the preservation of law and order in the South”.

⁹⁹ Bona Malwal 1981: 69.

¹⁰⁰ See for instance Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 84, Deng D. Akol Ruay 1994: 106, and Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 59.

¹⁰¹ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 20-21.

population.¹⁰² For years, the local population were their only source of money, food and other supply, as the attempts to gain support by international channels proved difficult.¹⁰³ Consequently, army barracks and police stations for a long time worked as the movements' main suppliers of military equipments, such as modern arms and ammunition.

This situation was about to change as a result of failed government tactics in 1965. The transitional government, under international pressure, agreed to allow arms support from the United Arab Republic (Egypt) and Algeria, intended for the Congolese Simba guerrilla, be transported through Southern Sudan.¹⁰⁴ This policy gave two main results for the Southern insurgents: Firstly, a number of weapons that never reached the Simbas, ended instead in the hands of Anya-Nya fighters. Secondly, when the Simbas lost and withdrew into Southern Sudan, most of their arms were given to or stolen by Anya-Nya fighters, or sold to them in exchange for food.¹⁰⁵ The weapons they received as a result of the Sudanese government's interference in the Congolese civil war came to them as a "godsend [sic] supply", which was an important factor in enabling the Anya-Nya for the first time to lead efficient warfare.¹⁰⁶ Thus, as the suppressive policies of the military regime of 'Abboud had contributed considerably to the increased recruitment of new fighters throughout the Southern region, the policies of the transitional government added to this by contributing to the build-up of arms among them.

Wakoson divides the Anya-Nya recruitment and activities into two phases. In the first phase the main focus lay on recruitment and training, and the activities were done randomly and uncoordinated in the different regions: The Western Equatoria and Bahr al-Ghazal units recruited fighters locally and gave them basic training locally before sending them to bigger training centres abroad.¹⁰⁷ The training camps outside Sudanese borders were in Zaire (Congo), the Central African Empire, and in Ethiopia. The former two were used as training camps for fighters from western Equatoria and

¹⁰² Bona Malwal 1981: 71.

¹⁰³ Deng D. Akol Ruay 1994: 107.

¹⁰⁴ The Simba guerrilla had since September 1963 been fighting the Congolese government in North-East Congo. See R.O. Collins in R.O. Collins (ed.) 2005: 221-222.

¹⁰⁵ Douglas H. Johnson 2003: 31, and H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 38.

¹⁰⁶ Quote from "The Anya-Nya Struggle. Background, Objectives and Motives. "

¹⁰⁷ Elias Nyamlell Wakoson in Mohamed Omer Beshir (ed.) 1984: 137-138.

Bahr al-Ghazal, the latter recruited fighters from the Upper Nile Province. The Upper Nile fighting force was initiated in Ethiopia, and received all its basic training there.¹⁰⁸ Although exact numbers have been impossible to confirm, O'Ballance suggests that the Anya-Nya by the end of 1964 had probably grown into 5000 fighters, "[...] but only about 10 per cent had firearms".¹⁰⁹

Neither the political nor the armed resistance in Southern Sudan were instigated as grass-root movements. Quite the contrary, it has been claimed to be an insurgency instigated by political and military elites that each in their own way and by their own strategies strived for the support of the Southern population:

"The insurgency, in both political and military terms, was not, particularly in this first phase [1963-1965], a mass movement; elite figures such as Deng and Oduho, in exile, were closely identified with encouraging political insurrection. Within Sudan, military leaders, such as Taffeng, were responsible for attempting to develop the fighting forces [...]."¹¹⁰

Indeed, the Anya-Nya miserably failed to produce political awareness among the Southern population, and thus made it difficult to gain support among civilians. The conflict between the political and the military wings of the Southern resistance movement increased throughout the 1960s, and there was a growing resentment among Anya-Nya fighters towards the intellectual politicians who would profit considerably after the war was won, although they merely talked while the Anya-Nyas were fighting the war.¹¹¹

Emerging from a realization that any political solution to their grievances would be worthless, a group of military leaders got together and formed the Land Freedom Army (LFA) in September, 1963.¹¹² This organisation soon changed the name to Anya-Nya, and a common strategy of military campaigns against the Army and police stations, although they most commonly affected civilians, was planned. On the 9th and 19th September, 1963 the first somewhat organised attacks by Anya-Nyas were

¹⁰⁸ Daniel Nyang, who had fled to a refugee camp in Ethiopia, was asked to initiate an Anya-Nya unit from there in October 1961. *Ibid.*: 141. Wakoson concludes, when discussing this early period of Anya-Nya resistance, that even if this period could seem inactive when looking at the warfare, the resistance was in fact quite active, concentrating on propaganda, training and organisation.

¹⁰⁹ Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 79.

¹¹⁰ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 21.

¹¹¹ R.O. Collins states that some Anya-Nya leaders even banned the use of English as a means to prove their resentment towards the Southern intellectuals. R.O. Collins in R.O. Collins (ed.) 2005: 222.

¹¹² Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 59.

carried out, when two police stations, in Pachola and Kajo Kaji, were attacked by rebels.¹¹³ Emilio Tafeng was appointed Commander-in-Chief, and a common military system, of formations, ranks and words of command, was agreed to. O'Ballance claims that the first Anya-Nya operations, which were launched from September 1963 to February 1964 were a setback, which devastated Anya-Nya morale.¹¹⁴ These attacks were not instigated by the military leadership of the movement, though, but rather by William Deng, a leading personality of the political exile movement: When the Northern army captured 60 Anya-Nya fighters and their Captain Bernadino after a failed attack on a military garrison in Wau, they found a letter on Bernadino. The letter was written by William Deng and authorized the attack on Wau. O'Ballance believes that Deng hoped to internationalize the conflict by these attacks, and that it as such was part of his plan to attract international attention and support to the cause of the Southern insurgents.¹¹⁵

Until Israel initiated its support for the Anya-Nya in 1969, the movement hardly received any material support from foreign actors.¹¹⁶ According to Douglas H. Johnson, the only international support the insurgents had in the early years came from South Africa and Malawi, a support that in effect may have harmed them more than it helped them, because they were merely attempts to lead the focus away from the unsympathetic anti-apartheid propaganda that those countries were subject to.¹¹⁷ Other than that, the only foreign influence on their activities was the passive acceptance by Ethiopia, the Central African Empire and Zaire (Congo), when allowing recruiting activities and training camps on their territory.¹¹⁸ One reason for this could have been that the political aims of the movement were difficult to gain international support for. Their separatist demand was opposed to the public policy of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), as one of the most important goals of that organisation was to maintain the borders inherited from their old colonial rulers.

¹¹³ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 21.

¹¹⁴ Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 60.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 55-56.

¹¹⁷ Douglas H. Johnson 2003: 32.

¹¹⁸ Elias Nyamlell Wakoson in Mohamed Omer Beshir (ed.) 1984: 145. One explanation that has been given to the lack of interference in the conflict by bordering countries is that several countries in the region felt threatened by separatist groups. There was thus a widespread fear that the conflict would spill over across the Sudanese borders and result in the disintegration of nation states in the entire region. Zaire, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda all feared such groups inside their countries. See Ibid.: 159-160.

Hayer concludes that the Anya-Nya was not a unified movement until the late 1960's.¹¹⁹ This is supported by Douglas H. Johnson, who claims that fighting between Anya-Nya factions was common until as late as 1970.¹²⁰ This fragmentation was devastating to its efficiency and internal morale, and might even be the reason why the Anya-Nya were not represented at the RTC/TMC. In 1970, Joseph Lagu managed to unite the movement under his political and military control, and even though it was somewhat divided even under the leadership of Lagu, this period was the least fragmented in the history of the Anya-Nya movement. The opponents towards Lagu's leadership either went into exile, "retired" from political work or were dismissed from the movement, and thus leaving Lagu to lead the movement without interference by rivals.¹²¹ Besides this factor, Israel's support, which was channelled to the movement through Lagu, is commonly seen as a key factor in enabling Lagu to unifying the movement.¹²²

The Southern Political Parties

It was not only the militant Southerners who were weak in the first decade after independence. The Southern region was represented in the National Assemblies between 1956 and 1958, but their opinions on the southern question were consistently ignored. In spite of their efforts, the Southern region was neglected politically, economically and materially, a situation which frustrated and disappointed Southerners either fighting in the bush or in the Assemblies, and it fuelled their suspicions towards Northern sincerity in the Southern question.

When the Sudanese National Assembly voted for independence, 19 December, 1955, it was with the support of the few Southerners present. Their condition for supporting the declaration of independence was that federation for the South should be considered, a condition that was agreed to by the Northerners, but not upheld by any

¹¹⁹ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 4.

¹²⁰ Douglas H. Johnson 2003: 33.

¹²¹ Elias Nyamlell Wakoson in Mohamed Omer Beshir (ed.) 1984: 202.

¹²² H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 55-56.

subsequent Sudanese government.¹²³ The first independent Sudanese government was a coalition government led by Ismail al-Azhari and the *Khatmiyya* based National Unionist Party. Two Southerners were represented in the Azhari government: Bullen Alier and Buth Diu. Both were dismissed because of their opposition to Azhari's policy towards the South. When a committee to consider the Southern demand for federation was appointed, only three out of 46 members were Southerners, and all three of them withdrew from the committee long before its concluding report were published, because they were "always hopelessly outvoted".¹²⁴

Abboud's banning of political organisations had effectively forced all Southern political activists into exile in neighbouring countries. The actors that would be of most crucial importance to the RTC- and TMC-processes were those who in the 'Abboud period established themselves as prominent politicians working from exile in neighbouring countries. This movement developed without any direct links to the Anya-Nya, as the fighting forces in the South came to be known in the mid-1960s.¹²⁵ The popular overthrow of the 'Abboud regime, and the conciliatory attitude of the Khalifa government, had direct effects on both the political movement and the fighting forces. For instance, politically aware Southerners were all of a sudden free to organise in political movements to fight for their beliefs, as the Southern Front did when organising Southern academics based in the North.

Sudan African National Union (SANU)

In 1960 the first Southern exile-based political movement began to surface and in the subsequent five years its founders and leading members functioned as the main political mouthpiece for the Southern cause, abroad and inside the Sudan. Whatever faction they belonged to, they claimed to represent the Southern people –even though no elections were conducted that could confirm this.¹²⁶ The Sudan Christian

¹²³ The Southerners in the 1955 National Assembly repeatedly asked for a plebiscite determining the status for the South, but both Northern Sudanese and the British rejected this demand. Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 45. This was to become an important issue in the RTC and TMC negotiations.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*: 46.

¹²⁵ R.O. Collins in R.O. Collins (ed.) 2005: 222.

¹²⁶ Contemporary Northerners repeatedly attempted to point out Southerners favouring union with the North, such the Southern Unity Party, as legitimate representatives for the Southern people, but none of these are by any researchers acknowledged as legitimate representatives of anything more than limited tribal sections of the population.

Association (SCA) was established in Uganda in 1961.¹²⁷ SCA was founded by Joseph Oduho, Aggrey Jaden, Alexi Mbali and Saturnino Lohure. The latter functioned as a patron for the Southern politicians in exile until his death in 1967. Other prominent members were Marko Rume and Pancrasio Ocheng. In 1962 the headquarter of the organisation was moved to Leopoldville (Congo), and its name was changed, to Sudan African Closed Districts National Union (SACDNU). By then, William Deng had joined the party-leadership, as Secretary-General.¹²⁸ In 1963, the party moved its headquarter to Kampala, Uganda, and changed its name again, to Sudan African National Union (SANU).¹²⁹ SANU remained its official name throughout the RTC- and TMC-processes, although it disintegrated into several factions due to personal conflicts within the leadership, as will be accounted for in this chapter. These Southern intellectuals worked towards both international bodies and the local population inside the Southern Sudan. Appeals were sent to international organs, such as the UN and OAU, seeking support for their struggle.¹³⁰ Additionally, exiled political leaders on at least one occasion attempted to utilize armed Anya-Nyas to create a scenario that would bring about a UN or OAU intervention of the South.¹³¹

The conflict between Southern politicians and the Anya-Nya fighting forces was evident from the beginning. As political activity was banned throughout the Southern region, the political leaders were forced to work from exile, and thus their possibilities to control the Anya-Nya were limited. Ideologically, the political exiles deliberately distanced themselves from the militant groups inside the country. Oduho, for instance, while being SACDNU President, publicly denounced the fighting forces, and refused any connection with their activities.¹³² SANU continued this policy until they realised the potential of the fighting forces in late 1964.¹³³ This realisation initiated the struggle between the political and the military leadership, for power to command the

¹²⁷ Elias Nyamlell Wakoson in Mohamed Omer Beshir (ed.) 1984: 184.

¹²⁸ Oliver Albino 1970: 45.

¹²⁹ Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 54.

¹³⁰ See for instance: Petition to United Nations by Sudan African Closed Districts National Union (SACDNU) South Sudan. Durham Special Collections' Reference: G//S 1187 - Box 22/5b – S. (South 1/13/125.), and Memorandum Presented by the Sudan African National Union to the Commission of the Organisation of African Unity for Refugees. Kampala –Uganda, November 1964. Durham Special Collections' Reference: G//S 1187 - Box 26/4b – 3. See also documents published in Yosa Wawa 2005.

¹³¹ Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 61.

¹³² Ibid.: 54. See also H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 27-28.

¹³³ Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 61.

actions of the fighting forces. This struggle lasted until Joseph Lagu gained the upper hand and finally managed to unite the Anya-Nya under his command in 1970.¹³⁴

SANU was plagued by severe disintegration. The most crucial issue on which the SANU factions differed, were whether to demand complete separation or some sort of federation or con-federation. The two factions of the movement were lead by the duo Joseph Oduho/Aggrey Jaden (SANU-outside) and William Deng (SANU-inside), and their final split in 1965 was a direct result of the pre-Round Table Conference events.¹³⁵

Deng was in Geneva when he, without the consent or knowledge of the rest of the SANU leadership, wrote to the transitional government of Prime Minister Khalifa in November 1964.¹³⁶ In the letter he suggested to organize a round-table conference to try to solve the violent conflict in the South.¹³⁷ In addition to this suggestion, Deng demanded that the transitional government grant a general amnesty for all Southern refugees and that SANU be recognized as a legitimate Sudanese political party and allowed to function in the South. The letter also announced that SANU accepted that the Northern and Southern regions of the Sudan were to be recognized as one state with both African and Arab heritages and thus “two distinct personalities, cultures and temperaments”.¹³⁸ It was thus proposed that federation should be considered as the future constitutional relationship between Southern and Northern Sudan: “Unity in diversity is the answer to the Southern Problem, and this can be found in a federal solution.”¹³⁹

This initiative outraged the more ardent separatists within the SANU leadership. They did not want any peace conference at that time, and they certainly did not want

¹³⁴ Ibid.: 135.

¹³⁵ The prevailing perception in the literature is that the split in SANU came as a result of the RTC, and not before it. This thesis will handle this differently, though, because the SANU leaders in exile dismissed William Deng and his supporters from the party prior to the RTC. Thus, it seems more accurate to describe the diverging SANU wings as different parties from February 1965. See Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 72.

¹³⁶ Abel Alier in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973: 28.

¹³⁷ Deng, William 1964: “Letter from Sudan African National Union (Sanu) to Prime Minister of the Sudan on Political Relations between North and South.” Appendix no. 10 in M.O. Beshir 1968.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

negotiations to take place inside Sudan, where they felt neither welcomed nor safe.¹⁴⁰ Additionally, many of the SANU leaders did not accept the principle of 'unity in diversity' as basis of a solution to the conflict, as they wanted separation and did not recognize the decision of unity that was initially made at the Juba Conference of 1947. Deng travelled to Khartoum and engaged in talks with the transitional government, in spite of those protests. 27 February 1965, Deng and his followers arrived in Khartoum.¹⁴¹ The same evening, the SANU leadership in Kampala released a statement announcing that Deng was dismissed from the party. The separatists in SANU insisted on holding an eventual conference either in Southern Sudan or outside the country, and strongly resisted Deng's talks with the transitional government.¹⁴²

The conflict between the two SANU's only worsened after it became evident that the security situation did not allow for the conference to be held in Southern Sudan, and Deng and his followers still continued the meetings trying to organise for it to be arranged in Khartoum. It soon became obvious that the split in SANU in fact represented two separate parties, with differing aims and ideas.¹⁴³ Not until after the RTC, though, were the two seen as separate parties. By then, Deng's SANU came to be known as SANU (inside) while Jaden's group were known as SANU (outside). SANU was at the RTC represented by William Deng, Elia Lupe, Elia Duang, Hilary U. Akwong, Nekanora Aguer, George Lomoro, Lawrence Wol Wol, George Kwanai, Oliver Albino and Aggrey Jaden, although Jaden left after holding his initial speech.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Oliver Albino 1970: 50.

¹⁴¹ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 72.

¹⁴² Mohamed Omer Beshir 1975: 52-53.

¹⁴³ "The Morning News", 28 February and 1 March, 1965, as quoted in "From Northern Sudan Arab Papers", ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency Documents): 8-9.

¹⁴⁴ "Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents), and R.O. Collins' Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections' Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 No. 75, So. 1/21/247. Minutes of the first meeting held on Saturday, 22 May, 1965. All these men represented SANU, as the split between the 'inside' and 'outside' factions, although already apparent, had not yet been publicly articulated.

SANU (inside)

William Deng and his SANU (inside) consisted of those member of the 'original' SANU who supported a federal or con-federal solution for the country.¹⁴⁵ This put them in a somewhat 'middle-position' at the RTC and TMC, between the uncompromising Northern unionists and Southern separatists. Indeed, some of the RTC- and TMC-discussions ended up with agreement on proposals initially given by SANU (inside).

In his speech to the RTC on behalf of SANU (inside), William Deng claimed that there were only two possible solutions for the conflict: Separation or federation.¹⁴⁶ In his line of arguments it was claimed that Northern and Southern Sudan were too different to be ruled by a unitary government, and that these differences were part of the explanation for the violent insurgency in the South. As federation was not contradictory to the OAU Charter nor the principles of the UN, SANU (inside) recommended that such a solution should be implemented in the Sudan, and Deng listed a range of powers that should be referred to Southern administration for this purpose.¹⁴⁷ Deng proposed the setting up of a Southernized command that would operate under a unified Sudanese Army, and that a Constitutional Commission of Southerners and Northerners, led by a neutral, OAU-appointed Chair should be set up in order to find a suitable Constitution for the country.

In addition, Deng presented a list of 22 "Immediate steps to be taken by the Sudan Government", which included Southernization of Southern administration, police, prison officers and other public positions, selection of Southerners to be given education for such jobs, developmental initiatives in the South, such as agricultural plantations and factories, reorganisation and re-planning of the School system in the South, freedom for anyone to establish private schools and hospitals, Southernizing, strengthening and reorganising of Broadcasting and Information Offices in the South

¹⁴⁵ According to "The Morning News", 28 February, 1965, those who arrived in Khartoum together with Deng were Elia Duang, Ezekiel Kodi, David Arwin, Peter Eiet, Rizgalla Ibrahim Moruwell, Benjamin Olluth and G.P. Lupaya. As quoted in "From Northern Sudan Arab Papers" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency Documents): 8.

¹⁴⁶ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: William Deng ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. This list included economic planning, internal security, police, prisons, judiciary, health, education, agriculture and forestry, game, land, housing and administration, as well as the right to raise loans "under the guidance of a Central government".

and re-transferring Southern educational institutions in the North to the South.¹⁴⁸ Many of these suggestions actually became part of the RTC recommendations that the subsequent Khartoum governments ignored.

The insistent attempts by SANU (inside) to initiate a conference that could possibly conclude the civil war in the South gained a lot of support among Southerners, a support which essentially forced SANU (outside) and the Southern Front to give in and attend in spite of their initial resistance.¹⁴⁹

SANU (outside)

The resistance held by SANU (outside) against attending the RTC if held in Khartoum, originated in a range of arguments, one of them being the fear that they would end up being deceived by the Northerners to agree to something even less than federation. If this happened, it could give Northern politicians another signed document, just as that signed by the delegates at the Juba Conference, seemingly affirming that Southerners would accept unity without a popular vote being held. Khartoum as a venue for the conference was also perceived as strengthening the Northerners, as it would weaken the role of the international observers, who would be “in the embarrassing position of being guests of one of the contending sides”.¹⁵⁰ It was owing to the pressure by Southern Front delegates that SANU (outside) finally arrived in Khartoum on March 15 to attend the conference.¹⁵¹

SANU (outside) were willing to accept nothing short of separation as a solution to the civil war, and thus Deng’s initiative and subsequent statements that Southerners favoured federation were perceived as a fierce betrayal. The party claimed that they had learnt “[...] from hard practical experience over the years to be suspicious of the promises made by the Sudan Government.”¹⁵² Nevertheless, they finally agreed to sending a delegation to the conference, although the leader of their delegation, Aggrey Jaden, abruptly left Khartoum after holding a hostile introductory speech on behalf of

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 99.

¹⁵⁰ Oliver Albino 1970: 50.

¹⁵¹ “The Morning News”, 16 March, 1965, as printed in “From Northern Sudan Arab Papers” (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency Documents): 21.

¹⁵² “The Nation” (Kampala Daily Newspaper) 18 January, 1965, as quoted in Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 67.

SANU (outside).¹⁵³ In his speech to the RTC Jaden demanded elections in the South, to give the Southern people an opportunity to decide for themselves whether they wanted a future in union or federation with the Northern Sudan, or as an independent state. The Southern conflict, according to SANU (outside) was based on the vast racial, cultural and religious differences between Northern and Southern Sudan: “With this real division there are in fact two Sudans and the most important thing is that there can never be a basis of unity between the two.”¹⁵⁴ This is an important aspect of the rhetoric of SANU (outside). Their insistence on the impossibility of a solution implying unity with the North was directly based on ethnic differences, and was hence likely to widen the gap between the warring parties and their constituencies, as it legitimized continued warfare. By affirming and adding to Southern preconceived images of their own as opposed to the Northern identity, they created a situation where there was in reality no solution other than fighting the war until it was won, thus leading them right into Kaufman’s “symbolic politics trap”.

Jaden also approached the foreign observers, claiming that the conflict had already spread to neighbouring countries, a development that would continue were the Southerners not granted independence. The Southern Sudanese people were subject to colonialism and suppression by their Northern counterparts, and the international community was obliged to recognize their struggle for justice and freedom, Jaden claimed.

SANU (outside) consisted by mid-1965 of two blocks. The majority block argued in favour of independence gained through diplomatic means, such as gaining support in neighbouring states. The second block, led by Joseph Oduho, called themselves ‘extremists’, and supported the Anya-Nya strategy of winning self-determination through military means.¹⁵⁵ In June 1965, the Oduho-led block separated from SANU (outside), and established the Azania Liberation Front (ALF).¹⁵⁶ ALF claimed that the Anya-Nya was its military arm, and that they controlled the rebel movement

¹⁵³ Some of Jaden’s supporters, for instance George Kwanai, stayed in Khartoum throughout the negotiations.

¹⁵⁴ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Aggrey Jaden (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

¹⁵⁵ George W. Shepherd Jr. 1966: 208.

¹⁵⁶ Edgar O’Ballance 1977: 76. Among the previously mentioned SANU (outside) leaders that followed Oduho were Saturnino Lohure, George Kwanai, Pancrasio Ocheng and Marko Rume.

politically. They wanted to take a harder and more violent stance to achieve their separatist goal, and Jaden initiately denounced them for extremism. Jaden and his followers ultimately merged with ALF, making Oduho President and Jaden Vice-President of the organization. Nonetheless, the situation once again was spoiled by the personal rivalries between Oduho and Jaden, when Jaden was dismissed from ALF in December 1965, after allegedly having met William Deng to discuss the Southern situation, without informing Oduho.

The Southern Front

Southern Front was established in Khartoum in November 1964, by Southern students and academics in Khartoum, with Gordon Abiei as President.¹⁵⁷ The Southern Front leaders were quick to establish the party and made the most of the few months being the only registered party of Southerners in Khartoum.¹⁵⁸ They utilized that position in various ways, for instance by refusing to accept Ambrose Wol as Minister in the transitional government, and pushing through their own candidate, Izbon Mondiri. When formally registered as a political party in June, 1965, Clement Mboro was registered as its president, Gordon Muortat its Vice-President and Hilary Logali its Secretary-General.¹⁵⁹ Its support-base was mainly Southern civil servants and students living in Northern Sudan.

Southern Front worked as a mouthpiece of SANU (outside) in Khartoum, and initially of the same opinion as SANU (outside) that the RTC should preferably be held outside the Sudan.¹⁶⁰ It supported SANU (outside) in the crucial issues debated at the RTC, and continually through the negotiations at the TMC, where SANU (outside) were not represented. The Southern Front leadership felt a legitimate fear to be sidelined by Deng and his party, were the government to proceed with the negotiations without SANU (outside) and Southern Front. Possibly resulting from this fear, they were the most ardent lobbyist towards the SANU (outside) when it became

¹⁵⁷ Oliver Albino 1970: 59.

¹⁵⁸ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 63.

¹⁵⁹ Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 76.

¹⁶⁰ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 89.

clear that the conference would proceed even without their participation.¹⁶¹ The party sent seven delegations to East Africa to convince SANU (outside) to attend the RTC, although it did not declare its full commitment to the holding of the Conference until 6 March, 1965.¹⁶² When it finally assembled, the Southern Front attended the RTC with 9 delegates: Gordon Muortat, Abel Alier, Gordon Abiei, Othwonn Buogo, Othwonn Dak, Natale Olwak, Lubari Ramba, Bona Malwal and Romano Hassan.¹⁶³ After realising the failure of the RTC/TMC process, Gordon Muortat left Khartoum to join the rebel movement, as did many Southerners in that period.¹⁶⁴

The Southern Front and SANU (inside) had a number of differences and disputes throughout the RTC and the TMC-negotiations; for instance who were legitimate representatives to the TMC, and whether to demand federation or separation in the RTC/TMC negotiations. The Southern Front representatives in the TMC supported the claim of SANU (outside) that they, and not the leaders of SANU (inside), were the legitimate representatives in that Committee and they also proved persistent in their demand for self-determination with the possible outcome of separation, at both the RTC and the TMC. The Southern Front opposed Southern elections in 1965, claiming that the security situation was not satisfactory.¹⁶⁵

Other Southern Parties

Some Southern parties were indeed registered in the wake of the October Revolution that advocated neither self-determination nor federation. None of these gained any significant support, though they were represented in government and in parliament in the 1960's.

The Sudan Unity Party (SUP) emerged as a political group in the aftermath of the October Revolution.¹⁶⁶ Its leaders, Santino Deng and Philemon Majok, were among

¹⁶¹ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 75. According to Salih, the Southern Front sent seven delegations to East Africa during the initiating phase of the RTC, attempting to convince the leaders of SANU (outside) to join the conference.

¹⁶² On that date, Southern Front published a statement declaring that they acknowledged the need for negotiations, and fully supported the Conference. Ibid.

¹⁶³ "Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

¹⁶⁴ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 35.

¹⁶⁵ Abel Alier 1990: 32.

¹⁶⁶ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1975: 9.

the Southern unionists who were appointed by the Khartoum government to attend the RTC.¹⁶⁷ The Northern parties insisted that the Southerners should be represented with ‘Other Shades of Opinion’, than those presented by SANU (inside), SANU (outside) and the Southern Front. They put forward an ultimatum, saying that if this was not allowed, they would boycott the RTC. The Southern parties protested, saying that this was an attempt by the Northern Parties to confuse the public concerning Southern grievances and representation. The ultimatum was nevertheless obeyed, and the Transitional government appointed nine delegates to represent the SUP. As will be further discussed in Chapter 3 below, the SUP representatives after a heated discussion in the RTC declared that they had no objections to the views of the SANU and the Southern Front, and thus the negotiations proceeded without their participation.¹⁶⁸

Santino Deng and Philemon Majok both claimed that they represented large sections of the Southern population, although that was contradicted in elections: Deng failed to win his home constituency in both elections of 1966 and 1968, and Majok, who formed the Nile Unity Party for the purpose of running for the 1968 elections, won only one seat in parliament.¹⁶⁹ SUP criticised the leaders of SANU and Southern Front of being self-absorbed and living safe and wealthy abroad while others sacrificed themselves for their cause in the war in the South. SUP supported unity with the North, and claimed that by giving power to native chiefs and local tribal divisions in the South, the Southern Problem would be solved, within a frame of unity.

Buth Diu, in an attempt to restore the Liberal Party, founded the Free Southern Front after the October Revolution, without much success.¹⁷⁰ The FSF joined SUP in its criticism against the SANU and Southern Front, claiming that no political or economic grievances were legitimate in Southern Sudan. Rather, the “wrong ideas about the North” among Southerners were the actual problem of the South.¹⁷¹ Both the SUP and the FSF were accused of lacking credibility, as their founders had

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.: 10.

¹⁶⁸ It had been decided as a compromise agreement, that the Northern appointed delegation from SUP and FSF (the ‘Other Shades of Opinion’) would have a limited mandate in the negotiations. Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 93-94.

¹⁶⁹ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 65.

¹⁷⁰ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1975: 9.

¹⁷¹ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 66.

cooperated with the ‘Abboud regime, and because they claimed more support than they actually had when attempting to gain positions and power in Khartoum. FSF produced two offshoots in the period of 1965-1969: The Liberal Party and the Southern National Peace Party.¹⁷²

In addition, the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) founded a Southern branch; The Sudan African Socialist Union (SASU). SASU was led by Joseph Garang, who won a Graduates’ seat in the 1965 elections, and later was appointed Minister of Works by Ja’far Nimeiri after the military coup of 1969.¹⁷³

The Northern Political Parties

The most striking feature of Northern Sudanese politics is the sectarian influence that has been crucial for every democratic Sudanese government since independence. During the Condominium, both the British and the Egyptians acknowledged the power that the *Ansar* and the *Khatmiyya* held as result of their vast support-bases, and their policies towards those movements in the period of 1920-1955 had severe consequences for the sectarian usurping of wealth and power in the country.¹⁷⁴ The sectarian leaders, the “two Sayyids”, built up huge fortunes through their cooperation with the imperial powers, fortunes which later enabled them to further increase their support-bases and maintain a firm grip on the political and economic power throughout the country.

The fact that their constituencies were grounded in their religious movements had an important impact on Sudanese politics in the 1960’s, and effectively hindered a secular development. The Islamic rhetoric of Northern political parties created fear in the South, a feeling that was regularly reinforced when debates concerning secularism and religion compelled the traditionalist parties to side with the Islamist forces rather than those more conciliatory toward the Southern peoples. This even threatened the

¹⁷² Mohamed Omer Beshir 1975: 31.

¹⁷³ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 65.

¹⁷⁴ M.W.Daly in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 7.

unity of the United National Front (UNF), when Islamic forces suggested purging of the communists from that movement.¹⁷⁵

National Unionist Party (NUP)

The National Unionist Party (NUP) was initially the political offspring of the traditional sufi-brotherhood *Khatmiyya*, although it was a complex political party which drew its support from a variety of sections among the urban population: *Khatmiyya* members, *Ashiqqa* supporters as well as some extreme unionists supported the party in the 1950's.¹⁷⁶ It also drew significant support from the Blue Nile Province, and from the nomadic Kababish.¹⁷⁷ The NUP proclaimed its support for union with Egypt, under the slogan 'Unity of the Nile Valley', and was a devoted opponent of the British colonisers. In the Sudanese general election held in November 1953, NUP gained majority in the Lower House, and the party formed government under the premiership of Isma'il al-Azhari. The NUP electoral victory in 1953 probably resulted mainly from their uncompromising criticism towards the British administration, as well as from fear that the Umma Party would reinstate a new Mahdist state if their power was not limited. In February 1956 internal conflicts between *Ashiqqa*' and *Khatmiyya* supporters overthrew the al-Azhari-government. The Prime Minister's secularist position was supported by the *Ashiqqa* faction inside the NUP, but soon became intolerable for Ali al-Mirghani, the head of the *Khatmiyya*, who ordered some of his key NUP partners to form a new political party; the People's Democratic Party (PDP).¹⁷⁸ After this break with the Mirghanis, the NUP relied on the educated middle-class in the Northern cities, and was seen by many among the urban bourgeoisie as an alternative to the 'reactionary' sectarian parties.¹⁷⁹

Ideologically, the NUP attempted to position itself somewhere in-between the PDP and the Umma Party, its two sectarian rivals.¹⁸⁰ In spite the fact that the NUP claimed to be the only secular voice among the traditional forces in Sudanese politics, it strongly supported Arabization and Islamization of the South. Indeed, al-Azhari, in

¹⁷⁵ Abdel Salam Sidahmed 1996: 82. The United National Front was the movement formed by the Northern political parties in the process of the overthrow of 'Abboud in October, 1964.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.: 56.

¹⁷⁷ Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 82.

¹⁷⁸ Deng D. Akol Ruay 1994: 88.

¹⁷⁹ Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 80-81.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.: 82.

the NUP introductory speech to the RTC, was not afraid to alienate his Southern counterparts, as he stated:

“I feel at this juncture obliged to declare that we are proud of our Arab origin, of our Arabism and of being Moslem. The Arabs came to this continent, as pioneers, to disseminate a genuine culture and promote sound principles which had shed enlightenment and civilization throughout Africa [...].”¹⁸¹

NUP representatives to the RTC were Ismail al-Azhari, Mohamed Ahmed al-Mardi and Mohamed Osman Yassin.¹⁸²

People’s Democratic Party (PDP)

Formed by the *Khatmiyya* groups leaving the NUP, the PDP was blessed with the support of Ali al-Mirghani. Consequently, the party gained its main support in traditional *Khatmiyya* strongholds, the areas North and North-East of Khartoum, from the rural tribes in Kassala and Northern Provinces.¹⁸³ When the Azhari-led government left office in 1956, PDP and the Umma Party joined forces and formed a coalition government.¹⁸⁴ The Secretary-General of the Umma Party, Abdullah Khalil, became premier of this government, which by Mohamed Ahmed Mahgoub is labelled “the most catastrophic [alliance] in the history of Sudanese politics.”¹⁸⁵ The ideological orientation of the party has been vague and shifting: It has fluctuated between socialist sympathies and support for the more conservative ideas of the Umma Party. The PDP leadership decided to boycott the 1965 elections, probably because they wanted to enforce alterations of the electoral system to its advantage, as they forecasted they would be unable to compete with the number of parliamentary seats that the NUP and the Umma Party were likely to win in the existing system.¹⁸⁶ This led them into an alliance with the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) and some trade unions in an “alliance of progressive forces”, whose main aim was to counteract the ‘reactionary’ forces of society; the Umma Party, the NUP and the ICF. In August 1965, the PDP also withdrew from the TMC, again together with the SCP, claiming

¹⁸¹ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: N.U.P. - El Azhari ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

¹⁸² “Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South” (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

¹⁸³ Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 82.

¹⁸⁴ Deng D. Akol Ruay 1994: 88.

¹⁸⁵ Mohamed Ahmed Mahgoub 1974: 176.

¹⁸⁶ Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 218.

that the lack of a cease-fire made it impossible to reach a solution to the conflict through constitutional and administrative reforms.¹⁸⁷

The PDP representatives at the RTC were Ali Abdel Rahman, al-Hadi Abdoun and al-Fatih Aboud.¹⁸⁸ The opening speech of Ali Abdel Rahman made less direct proposals than some of the other Northerners.¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless, some important considerations about the North-South relationship were expressed. As an example, it went further than most other Northern delegates in openly claiming that adherents of Southern tribal religions were not to be considered religious. Ali Abdel Rahman said that although Muslims were a minority in the South, so were Christians, since, as he put it: “(...) the overwhelming majority which is well over 80% of the Southern population are still Heathen.”¹⁹⁰ This statement shed some important light on the claims of religious freedoms in the Sudan, as it was to become an important issue during the deliberations to agree on a Constitution in 1967-68: The draft Constitution that the Northern parties agreed to in 1968 held an apparent Islamic tone, and was seen as a victory by the Muslim Brotherhood and its political party the Islamic Charter Front.¹⁹¹ The final vote on this Constitution was only interrupted by the military coup of Ja'far Nimeiri in May 1968.

In the meantime, in 1967, the NUP and the PDP had decided to re-merge, again under the leadership of al-Azhari, into the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).¹⁹² This party drifted away from the ‘secularist’ line of al-Azhari, and in the 1980s released a political pamphlet that strongly warned against separatist forces in the South, and their hatred against Islam. It also stated that assimilation of the South and the establishment of an Islamic state had been the party’s policy ever since independence, and should continue to be enforced in peripheries all over the country:

“It is our top priority to speed up the spread of the Arabic language throughout the South and in the Nuba Mountains. In this era of modern national identities the importance of language as a means of

¹⁸⁷ See Chapter 3 below for details on these withdrawals.

¹⁸⁸ “Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South” (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

¹⁸⁹ For instance the Umma Party. See below.

¹⁹⁰ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: People's Democratic Party (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

¹⁹¹ Abdelwahab el-Affendi 1991: 79-81.

¹⁹² Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 120.

consolidating the Arab and Islamic culture is obvious. [...] We regard the spread of Arabic in these areas as part of *Jihad* (wholly war) for the sake of Allah [sic] and Arab nationalism.

Our policies toward the South thus outlined must be followed very soon by similar ones towards the Nuba Mountains and Darfur.”¹⁹³

The Umma Party

As accounted for above, the Umma Party lost some support and credibility in the 1953 elections because of their support for and cooperation with the British colonial administration during the Condominium. Nevertheless, this was a temporary situation, as the Umma Party can be said to have subsequently developed into the most powerful of the sectarian parties. In spite of internal conflicts, it held power throughout both the parliamentary periods of the 1960s (1965-1969) and the 1980's (1986-1989). Its main support-base has consistently been the *Ansar*, with their traditional strongholds in rural areas North and North-West of Khartoum, and the al-Mahdi family has maintained key leadership in the party ever since its formation in 1945. The Umma Party has in numerous occasions proved their power by mobilising *Ansar* supporters, moving them from the countryside and into the capital to attend threatening and violent protests.¹⁹⁴

Although clearly being an Islamic party, and arguably developing increasingly in an Islamist direction throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the Umma Party was not actively working for an Islamic state in the Sudan in 1964-66, and can thus not be described as an Islamist party at that time. Nonetheless, its roots were undoubtedly sectarian, and its electoral victories were dependent on its support of the *Ansar*, a factor which probably was crucial to its decision to support the cry for an Islamic constitution proposed by Islamist forces like the Islamic Charter Front (ICF).¹⁹⁵ Thus, the continuation of the political system as it had established itself in the country since independence undoubtedly was in the interest of the Umma Party.

¹⁹³ "Dup Policy Document on the South," *Newsudan: Organ of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (Pilot Issue, October 1986)*. Durham Special Collections' Reference: Medu*17/3/PRESSURE GROUPS.

¹⁹⁴ This happened in 1946, 1954, 1955, 1961 and 1965. Peter Woodward 1981: 386.

¹⁹⁵ Ahmad Alawad Sikainga in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 83. For information about the ICF, see below.

The crucial political differences between PDP and Umma Party policies lay in their positions on foreign policy. Traditionally, the Umma Party was more pro-Western, and opposed Egyptian influence in Sudanese affairs, while the PDP was more critical towards the British and supported a Sudanese-Egyptian union.

The Umma Party suffered from fragmentation in the parliamentary period in the 1960's, a split that weakened the party, although it was based on personal power-struggles more than on political differences.¹⁹⁶ Nevertheless, as the party led all the changing coalition governments of the 1960's, it held the largest share of responsibility for the policies led towards the South in that period. The party was, in line with the NUP and PDP, insistent on assimilation of pagan Southern societies, in order to obtain a national identity based on the Arab-Islamic culture and religion. Sadiq al-Mahdi, Umma Party Prime Minister in the period of July 1966-May 1967, although being seen as a 'progressive' force in the Umma Party in the 1960s, wrote in relation to this: "The dominant feature of our nation is an Islamic one and its overpowering expression is Arab, and its nation will not have its entity identified and its prestige and pride preserved except under an Islamic revival."¹⁹⁷

At the RTC, the Umma Party delegates were Sadiq al-Mahdi, Dawood al-Khalifa and Abbas Hamad Nasr.¹⁹⁸ Sadiq held the introductory speech on behalf of the party, in which he claimed that the final decision concerning unity between the two regions was taken at the Juba Conference of 1947, and that thus, separation or federation for the South was by 1965 "useless" demands.¹⁹⁹ Sadiq proposed the setting-up of a regional government in the South, and coming to agreement on a specific proportion of the national budget to be spent on developing the South. He also proposed to admit "full freedom of worship" in the South and the "Sudanization and Africanization" of

¹⁹⁶ R.O. Collins, personal correspondence, March, 2007. This is indeed supported by the fact that although seemingly favouring more liberal politics, especially in religious issues, Sadiq continued much of the policies introduced by the first Mahgoub government (June 1965-July 1966). Moreover, as for the conflict in the South, Sadiq never proved to be a liberal. He disapproved of the report handed to him by the Twelve-Man Committee, refused to reconvene the Round-Table Conference, and instead called for a completely new conference: The Political Parties Conference of 1966. See Chapter 4 below for more information on this.

¹⁹⁷ Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 117.

¹⁹⁸ "Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

¹⁹⁹ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Sadik El Mahdi for the Umma Party ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

all missionary activities in the region, as measures to reconcile Southerners and Northerners and end the violence.

The Islamic Charter Front (ICF)

The Islamic Charter Front (ICF) was basically an umbrella organisation for a number of Islamist parties, although its main driving force was the *Ikhwan*; the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood. The ICF was established as a political party immediately after the October Revolution, as a means for the *Ikhwan* to run in the coming elections. Its leader, Hasan al-Turabi, was a highly charismatic academic, who had returned to Khartoum in the fall of 1964, after finishing his Ph.D. in Constitutional law at Sorbonne. The Sudanese *Ikhwan* was an organisation of intellectuals, and held a strict focus on “the intellectual quality of the movement”.²⁰⁰ Logically, then, the main support-base of the ICF consisted of students and intellectuals, and of the 5 Parliamentary seats the party won in the 1965 elections, 2 were won in the graduates’ constituencies, and the other 3 were won in the Khartoum, Kassala and Darfur territorial districts.²⁰¹

The outspoken aim of the ICF was the establishment of an Islamic state in the Sudan, the South included. For the 1965 elections the main issues it fronted were the establishment of an Islamic state and Shari’a, economic reforms and the peaceful solution of the conflict in the South.²⁰² Being the main proponent in Sudanese politics of Shari’a and the establishment of an Islamic state in the Sudan, the ICF actively sought to put pressure on the sectarian parties to gain support for these demands. This was to a large degree a successful effort, considering the constitutional draft that was proposed by the constitutional committee in 1968, which held an outspoken Islamic tone.

Turabi and other prominent *Ikhwan* members in the ‘Abboud period blamed the escalation of the conflict in the South on the military regime and were persistent in their demands for the returning to democratic rule. After the return to civilian rule, the party held an uncompromising attitude on the issues of a centralised government and

²⁰⁰ Hasan al-Turabi, as quoted in Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 89.

²⁰¹ Ibid.: 232 and 237.

²⁰² Gabriel Warburg 1995: 227.

the position of the Arabic culture and the Islamic religion in the Sudanese society. By proposing such ideas at the RTC, while holding the Anya-Nya exclusively responsible for the continuation of violence in the South, the party fuelled Southern suspicions towards the intentions of Northern politicians. Even Northern Sudanese scholars have claimed that by insisting on Islamization measures, Islamists in the North played a direct role in spoiling the RTC negotiations.²⁰³ This was probably an additional effect of the prominent role played by Turabi during the constitutional and administrative negotiations at both the RTC and the TMC. As Head of Faculty of Law at the University of Khartoum, he has been seen as “the chief Northern negotiator” of those peacemaking processes.²⁰⁴ At the RTC, the ICF delegates were Hasan al-Turabi, Mohamed Yousif Mohamed and Osman Khalid.²⁰⁵

The Sudanese Communist Party (SCP)

The Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) was established in the late 1940's, although under a variety of disguised names and outlooks during its earliest years.²⁰⁶ Although banned during the colonial period and until the October Revolution of 1964, the SCP developed a strategy that allowed it to work as a political organisation underground throughout those periods.²⁰⁷ This strategy involved infiltration of workers' unions, and consequently associations that organised lawyers, doctors, teachers and engineers were infiltrated by communists during the 'Abboud period. Consequently, the party gained a political and organisational advantage when the military government was overthrown and democracy was to be restored. As all political party-activity was outlawed by 'Abboud, the SCP was the only party prepared to instantly fill the political vacuum that resulted from the fall of his regime. Thus, the party became a major force in the first transitional government (November, 1964 – February, 1965).

One distinct feature of the SCP as compared to traditional communist parties is that the communist ideology it proposed was moulded in order to make it compatible with

²⁰³ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 100.

²⁰⁴ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 129.

²⁰⁵ “Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South” (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

²⁰⁶ Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 88.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.: 216.

Islam.²⁰⁸ This probably gained them some voters among some segments of workers and tenants as well as some quarters of urban-based teachers, students and women. Additionally, the SCP has traditionally been the one political Northern Sudanese party working for major social and economic reforms. While the traditionalist parties have by and large ignored the interests of workers and tenants, the SCP has been characterised as “the most persistent proponent” of the interests of those groups.²⁰⁹ The SCP was the first political party to address the conflict in the South, when it proposed regional autonomy as a means to solve the conflict, in 1954.²¹⁰ This recommendation resulted from a special session for discussing the situation in the South, held by the central committee. That same year, the party also demanded equal pay for Southern workers and the Sudanization of teaching personnel in Southern Schools, proposals that were endorsed by Sudanese labour unions after independence. One condition was required, though: That a Socialist organisation was initially formed and established in the region.²¹¹

At the RTC the SCP claimed the roots of the conflict in the South to be the racial, cultural and geographical differences between the North and the South, and their exploitation by the colonial regime. It was admitted that negligence of those differences by subsequent Northern governments had exacerbated the conflict between Northerners and Southerners, and that as a result of this the South had to be offered regional autonomy. The party suggested that while matters such as economic planning, foreign affairs and security should remain with central authorities, executive and legislative power over local affairs should be transferred to regional authorities.²¹² An important political issue for the SCP was the struggle against the exploiting classes in the society, and the political and economic power that the traditionalist forces had usurped and utilized in the Sudan were claimed to be driving forces in the violent conflict in the South.

Nevertheless, in line with the other Northern parties, the SCP rejected separation and federation for the Southern region. Joseph Garang, a prominent Southern leader in the

²⁰⁸ Ibid.: 90.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.: 216.

²¹⁰ Ahmad Alawad Sikainga in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 89.

²¹¹ Peter Woodward 1981: 383.

²¹² Ahmad Alawad Sikainga in M. W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga (eds.) 1993: 90.

SCP who was executed by President Nimeiri in 1971, stated in relation to the question of separation or unity: “there is no real national entity in the South, and for this reason alone the principle of self-determination cannot apply.”²¹³ The SCP actively attempted to recruit Southerners, an effort that was not very successful. Most Southern political activists supported Southern organisations, like SANU(outside), SANU(inside), the Southern Front or the Anya-Nya, and the SCP was an zealous critic of those. According to one author, this made the SCP conclude that the lack of ‘progressive forces’ in the South hindered the establishment of regional autonomy for the region.²¹⁴

The SCP joined the PDP in their cry for electoral alterations and suspension of the planned 1965 elections, as they held one Cabinet post in the transitional government, which was more than they could hope for after elections, and they hoped to lengthen this period.²¹⁵ Nevertheless, as elections proceeded as planned, the SCP did not join the PDP boycott, and ended up winning 8 of the graduates’ seats.²¹⁶ Still, the second parliamentary period (1964-69) became no success for the SCP, as the sectarian parties enacted a law declaring it unconstitutional on religious grounds, on 9 December, 1965.²¹⁷ Sudanese courts overruled parliament more than a year later, 22 December 1966, but this decision was neglected by the government, and al-Azhari, who led the Supreme Council of State, reconfirmed the ban on 16 April 1967.

The Professionals’ Front

The National Front of the Professional Organisations (The Professionals’ Front) was proclaimed 25 October 1964, and was a coalition of academics and workers with leftist affiliations.²¹⁸ It was formed by student unionist, faculty members from Khartoum University and Khartoum Technical Institute as well as judges and lawyers. Peasants, workers and other professional organisations quickly joined the Professional’s Front, thus making it representative for large sections of the Northern Sudanese population. The infiltration of such organisations by the SCP resulted in a

²¹³ Joseph Garang, as quoted in *Ibid.*: 90.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 91.

²¹⁵ For a detailed analysis of the strategic reasons behind the PDP and SCP demands for postponing the elections, see Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 228.

²¹⁶ Table 7.3 in *Ibid.*: 232.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*: 243.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*: 215.

vast majority of communists and communist sympathisers in the Executive Board of the Professionals' Front, as 11 out of 15 members were affiliated with the leftist forces in the transitional period.²¹⁹ Consequently, the means for the solution of the conflict in the South was to a large degree similar to that proposed by the SCP. Western powers and the traditionalist Sudanese parties were held responsible for the problems of the Sudanese society, and the insurgency in the South was no exception.

The Professionals' Front actively supported political reforms aimed at liberating Sudanese women and improving their opportunities and living conditions, and linked itself up to the women's organisation of Fatima Ahmed Ibrahim.²²⁰ Consequently, many women supported the Professionals' Front, especially young, educated women based in Khartoum. Nonetheless, the popular support of the Front was negligible in comparison to that of the traditionalist forces, a realisation that led to it taking on an increasingly radical agenda.

At the RTC, the Professionals' Front's delegates were Mekkawi Mustafa, Abdulla al-Sayed and Ibrahim Mohayad.²²¹ Although the dominant position of communists in the leadership of the Professionals' Front may have been what enabled the movement to grow into such power in the immediate post-'Abboud period, this was also to become a main factor in its disintegration. When realising that they would not be able to diminish the support for the traditionalist parties, the leaders of the Front in January and February, 1965, gradually resorted to more radical policies. When realising that the Front actually promoted the interests of the Communist Party, and not merely anti-traditionalist policies, some organisations and members withdrew their support for the organisation.²²² Nonetheless, the organisation was represented at both the RTC and the TMC.

This chapter has painted a picture of the main political groups involved in the RTC and the TMC, and pointed out their political views on the North-South conflict. This is meant to prepare for an understanding of the various interests and positions that

²¹⁹ Ibid.: 216.

²²⁰ Ibid.: 217.

²²¹ "Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²²² Peter K. Bechtold 1976: 219.

were expressed during the negotiations in 1965-66, that will be closely examined in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3: THE ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE

As accounted for in the previous chapter, the October revolution led to significant changes in Khartoum's attitude towards the South. While 'Abboud refused to recognize there was a Southern problem in the Sudan, the transitional government of Sirr al-Khatim Khalifa chose a completely different strategy, publicly acknowledging that there was a conflict, and that it needed a political rather than a military solution.²²³ This renewed position in Khartoum had a range of consequences: For the first time a Khartoum government had acknowledged that the Southerners had genuine grievances, Southerners themselves were allowed to influence the selection of representatives from their region in government and the Prime Minister came up with immediate measures to ease the North-South-relationship. Another consequence of these concessions was that they made possible the Round-Table Conference (RTC). It is the proceedings and outcome of the RTC that will be given the main focus in this chapter. To begin with, however, the chapter will account for the historical and political context in which the RTC was convened.

The October Revolution and the New Democratic Experiment

The parliamentary periods of independent Sudan (1956-58, 1964-69 and 1986-89) have been short and frustrating, characterized by political bickering, devastating power struggles as well as riots or civil war. Even though the first parliamentary period (1956-1958) had been a disturbing experience for the Sudanese people, both Southerners and Northerners expressed relief and joy when the repressive regime of 'Abboud fell in October 1964. Nevertheless, public opinion was suspicious towards the national disintegration party politics had led to in the 1950s. Thus, the aim of the United National Front (UNF), when appointing the transitional government, was that the cabinet members should be diverse and representative of public opinion.²²⁴

Sirr al-Khatim Khalifa was chosen, then, because of his integrity and knowledge of the Southern region, as well as the trust he enjoyed among the Southern population. Khalifa has been described as being seriously concerned about the increasingly

²²³ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 86.

²²⁴ Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 98.

violent situation in the South.²²⁵ He indeed seemed seriously concerned about finding a political solution to the problem, as he already 10 November, 1964 issued a statement on the South, recognizing the cultural and ethnic differences between the Northern and the Southern regions.²²⁶ In this statement he additionally appealed for peace and negotiations, and stated that the only way to solve the conflict would be through political means.

Nonetheless, the transitional government was clear about their lack of mandate to make constitutional decisions. For instance, the Minister of Information, Khalafalla Babikir, stated 22 December, 1964, the transitional government was “not empowered to adopt a solution for the question of the South [...] However, it will spare no effort in creating an atmosphere for a bound solution.”²²⁷ Hence, in spite the fact that the transitional government had too weak a mandate to make any constitutional decisions, the policies implemented during his few months in power to a large degree went along the lines of Southern desires. Among the measures implemented in this period were the releasing of political prisoners; granting of a general amnesty to all Southerners in exile; returning freedoms of speech and press and repealing of the ban on political parties.²²⁸

However, the UNF was fragmented, and soon internal conflicts and power-struggles would restrict the reformation of the Sudanese political system. The two camps within the UNF were led by different and opposing forces, which clashed in verbal conflicts immediately after their original common goal was reached, namely the overthrow of the military regime. On the one side was the Professionals’ Front, which represented the radical and “modern sector forces: organised labour, tenant farmers’ unions, white collar and professional organisations.”²²⁹ These forces advocated extensive social, economic and political reforms, such as anti-corruption measures for the military and the civil services, an Act of Unlawful Enrichment, agrarian reforms, lowering of the

²²⁵ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 58. See also Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 98.

²²⁶ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 58.

²²⁷ Khalafalla Babikir, as quoted in *Ibid.*: 62.

²²⁸ Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 97. Both freedoms of press and speech were attacked in some serious events later: The massacres in Juba and Wau; the assassination of William Deng; the banning of the Southern newspaper *The Vigilant*; and the banning of the Sudanese Communist Party were but some of the actions carried through by successive governments in the period 1965-1969.

²²⁹ Abdel Salam Sidahmed 1996: 77.

universal suffrage rights and the inclusion of women into this. Such reforms were opposed by the Traditionalists within the UNF, because they were seen to threaten their interests. As Sidahmed explains, these divergent opinions originated in their different motivations for the overthrow of ‘Abboud: The Traditionalist forces saw in this “the long awaited opportunity to regain office”, while the ultimate aim of the Professionals’ Front was to establish a new and strengthened democratic system that would hopefully counteract the devastating corruption and personal power-struggles experienced in the 1950’s.²³⁰

The radical forces held the majority in the transitional government, and thus seemingly had the upper hand. The other camp constituted the traditionalist parties and the Islamic Charter Front (ICF), parties that strongly resisted the abovementioned reforms proposed by the radicals. The breakthrough, which led to their eventual seizure of power, became their insistence on the ‘National Charter’ paragraph setting the transitional period to six months, and the date for elections to 31 March, 1965. This period was by the radicals considered to be too short to enable them to implement their extensive programme, and attempts were made to postpone the elections. This initiated a landslide of protests by the right-wing forces, demanding that the transitional government resign if they intended to evade the ‘National Charter’. This developed into a mere power-struggle, which ultimately forced the non-partisan Prime Minister Khalifa to resign, on 18 February, 1965. The transitional government was dissolved, and a new one appointed, this time with a right-wing majority: The PDP, NUP, Umma Party and the Southern Front gained three ministers each, and the ICF and SCP were given two each.²³¹ Khalifa was reinstated as Prime Minister, but this time the majority of his government had a completely different agenda. The tables had turned, and once again the traditional, sectarian forces constituted the inner circles of power in Khartoum.

Round-Table Conference: Initiative and preparations

In the letter that William Deng wrote to the transitional government in November 1965, seemingly on behalf of SANU though really on his own initiative, he proposed

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid.: 79.

the convening of a round-table conference, to enable the political leaders on each side of the Southern conflict to meet and attempt to end the violence.²³² Believing that Deng spoke on behalf of the entire SANU, the Prime Minister welcomed his initiative, and began preparing for the convening of the first political attempt to conclude the Southern civil war.²³³ Several dates were considered, but the conference was repeatedly delayed, due to a variety of reasons: The visit of Queen Elizabeth on 8 February, a planned Southern Front conference in Malakal on 13 February and lastly, the work to convince the reluctant SANU(outside) to attend.²³⁴ The date for the Conference was finally, subsequent to the arrival of Deng and his supporters in Khartoum, set to 16 March. The venue of the conference was also uncertain until after the arrival of SANU(inside) to Khartoum. In spite of the original demand of the Southerners that the conference be held either in Southern Sudan or outside the country, the secretariat soon realised that the security situation in Southern Sudan was insufficient for holding such negotiations there, and it was decided to arrange for the conference to be held in Khartoum.²³⁵

Dawood Abdel Latif had returned from Kampala 26 January, 1965 with a prenegotiated agreement signed by William Deng, Michael Wal Duany and Elia Lupe, seemingly on behalf of SANU.²³⁶ On 28 January, 1965, Latif met with all the Northern parties to discuss the arrangements. They agreed to the procedural proposals of SANU(inside) that were brought to them by Latif, and appointed a secretariat, which was to be led by the respected academic Mohamed Omer Beshir.²³⁷ One month later, the Vice-Chancellor of Khartoum University, Professor El Nazeer Dafalla was appointed Chairman, and 7 March, 1965 joint preparatory negotiations were held between all the Northern political parties, SANU(inside) and the Southern Front. This meeting ended with a formulation of the main objective of the Conference: “to discuss the Southern Question with a view to reaching an agreement which shall satisfy the

²³² Deng, William, 1964: “Letter from Sudan African National Union (Sanu) to Prime Minister of the Sudan on Political Relations between North and South.” Appendix no. 10 in M.O. Beshir 1968.

²³³ Dunstan M. Wai 1981: 98.

²³⁴ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 76.

²³⁵ Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 90.

²³⁶ SANU (outside) rejected the validity of these signatures. SANU (outside) claimed that as the signatories had been dismissed from SANU, they could no longer legitimately represent the party.

²³⁷ Beshir later published a book giving his analysis on the causes of the Southern problem and the proceedings and failure of the RTC. From this book it is obvious that Beshir was unaware that this letter was an initiative of William Deng’s and not the entire SANU: “Federation was seen by SANU in this Memorandum as the only possible solution for the problem.” Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 89.

regional interests of the South as well as the national interests of the Sudan”.²³⁸ This formulation was brought up as a complaint at the RTC by the Southern Front, as will be accounted for below.

The statement released by the parties after the meeting on 7 March also announced their agreement that the conflict in the South was an internal one, which had to be solved democratically and without foreign interference, and appealed to SANU (outside) to join the conference.²³⁹

The work of the Round-Table Conference

The Round-Table Conference (RTC) convened at 16 March, and lasted until 30 March, 1965. It was intended to give Northerners and Southerners a possibility to meet and present each others’ views and proposals, in order to try to find a peaceful solution to the so-called Southern Problem, which all parties to the conflict seemingly agreed was a political one.

The Conference was attended by 27 Southern and 18 Northern delegates.²⁴⁰ The 27 Southern delegates represented four different parties: Two factions of the Sudan African National Union –SANU (inside) and SANU (outside) - the Southern Front, as well as the ‘Other Shades of Opinion’, a Northern-appointed coalition of the Sudan Unity Party (SUP) and the Free Southern Front (FSF).²⁴¹ The Northerners were represented by 18 delegates from six Northern parties. These were the Sudan Communist Party (SCP), the National Unionist Party (NUP), the Umma Party, Peoples’ Democratic Party (PDP), the Islamic Charter Front (ICF) and the Professionals’ Front.

The Southern representation became one of the initial RTC conflicts, as the SUP and FSF objected to their exclusion from the Conference, and publicly denounced on its opening day “the representation of seperationists [sic] alone, and the expulsion of

²³⁸ As quoted in *Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Prime Minister, Sirr El Khatim El Khalifa* ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²³⁹ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 75.

²⁴⁰ For a complete list of the delegates, see “Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South” ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁴¹ The participation of the delegates from the ‘Other Shades of Opinion’ was contested, as will be accounted for below.

unionist elements.”²⁴² The Northerners probably saw in this an opportunity to weaken the Southern delegation further, and declared that they were not content with the representation of SANU and the Southern Front. Many Southerners did not support the views of those parties, they claimed, and thus ‘Other Shades of Opinion’ should be represented in the Southern delegation. Some sort of agreement was finally reached on this issue, when both parties allowed the government to appoint nine additional Southern delegates (3 from each Southern Province) to participate in the Conference, although without the right to vote. This decision was opposed, though, as the SUP and FSF declared that there was in fact no ‘Southern Problem’, and that they would not guarantee their support of the RTC agreement were it to propose federation or separation. Some Northern voices also protested to this agreement, claiming it to be “a regrettable [sic] surrender by the Government to the orders of the SANU [...]”, and that “[...] it is one of a series of concessions to SANU that will, in the end, cost us dearly.”²⁴³ Nonetheless, after days debating issues of procedure and representation, when negotiations began on 18 March, both the SUP and the FSF had turned on their heels as they declared they had no additional view to those of SANU and the Southern Front. This u-turn was probably taken out of fear of being condemned in their home constituencies, as one ‘OSO’-representative stated: “I am now just considered as a Northerner, because I have been chosen by the North. [...] But I have to go to the South; or shall I remain here indefinitely?”²⁴⁴

Another conflict that arose during the opening days of the conference was a disagreement over how to guarantee responsibility for the final agreement.²⁴⁵ The Southerners wanted to submit the resolutions to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), to ensure national commitment to the solution and international involvement in the conflict. The Northerners opposed this, stating that the OAU would be an inappropriate organ to involve in this process, because the conflict was an internal one, which did not involve other countries. Moreover, the resolutions would be distributed to the observers to provide the kind of guarantee that the Southerners were asking for. As William Deng supported this last suggestion, the discussion cooled down, and it

²⁴² Joint statement by the SUP and FSF, 16 March, 1965 as quoted in Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 106.

²⁴³ *Al-Rai Al-A'am*, 17 March, 1965 as quoted in *Ibid.*: 107.

²⁴⁴ Chief Yousif Kiku, 3rd Meeting of the Round-Table Conference, as quoted in *Ibid.*: 113.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 114.

was agreed that the issue would be decided upon when the final solution was reached. Nonetheless, no claims for additional guarantees were raised when the conference finally announced its resolutions.

The abovementioned formulation, which stated that the main aim of the conference was to “reach an agreement which shall satisfy the regional interest of the South, as well as the national interest of the Sudan”, was also subject to conflict during the opening days of the conference.²⁴⁶ This formulation implicated problems that would be central in the debates of the RTC, as the content of the terms “regional interests of the South” and “national interests of the Sudan” were given no explicit definitions. Naturally, the delegates defined both the national interests and the Southern interests differently. The Southerners complained that the formulation implicated a precondition of unity, which they did not accept. The Northerners, on the other hand, claimed that the intention of this conference was to study the conflict with the aim to find a solution that would serve the interest of the Sudan as a whole. Hasan al-Turabi (ICF) claimed that if the final analysis concluded that separation for the South would be the solution that best served the interest of the Sudan, the Northerners might actually have to agree to separation. This debate finally ended with the following formulation: “to discuss the Southern Question with a view to reaching an agreement which shall satisfy the regional interests of the South as well as the special interests of the Sudan.”²⁴⁷

Introductory Speeches

During the first five days of the RTC, in the midst of these conflicts of representations and procedure, each party held an introductory speech, stating their views on the causes of, and possible solutions to, the conflict. The strategy of the Northern parties was more co-ordinated than that of the Southerners, diverging only on minor issues, even though they were represented with a variety of political parties, from the Communist Party to the Islamist ICF. The following will point out the main arguments of the Southerners and the Northerners, and distinguish their differences, both between the two main blocks and internal disagreements, between the different

²⁴⁶ Ibid.: 118.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.: 121.

parties within each. Two of the most basic issues debated at the RTC will be given the main focus: The historical perceptions forming the basis of their arguments; and the question of unity or separation.

Historical Perceptions

The inaugural speech of Prime Minister Khalifa was a carefully worded speech, which was prepared by the secretariat and, according to one author: “[...] aimed at giving the Problem an objective outlook; to express the North’s seriousness and sincerity; to inform the observers of the wide dimensions of the Southern Problem; and to reprimand the extremist Southern delegates for their insufficient, misleading and distated [sic] evidence.”²⁴⁸

The impression that this speech intended to give of the feelings of unity among the Sudanese people was romanticised and not very realistic, considering the increasingly violent rebellion that was going on in the South:

“[...] there is complete and absolute agreement between all sincere Sudanese whether they come from the North or the South, or from the East or the West –as to the necessity of hard and consistent work for the advancement of this country and for the happiness of all the Sudanese people irrespective of their differences in religious belief, tribal dialects or racial origins.”²⁴⁹

Further, this speech put the heavy load of responsibility of the conflict in the South on the colonial powers and European Missionaries, when calling their activities in the South before 1946 “[...] an organised part of an evil policy which was evolved by the imperialists for the purpose of destroying all human cultural and economic links between Northern and Southern Sudanese”.²⁵⁰ The speech acknowledged the lack of success that Northern governments since independence had in solving the conflict in the South, and criticised those Parliamentary governments of failing to address the root causes of the dissatisfaction in the Southern region. It also blamed the ‘Abboud regime for the increasing violence in the South in that period, while stating that its

²⁴⁸ Ibid.: 88. The absence of critical analysis of the Prime Minister’s inaugural speech is but one indicator of the bias in Salih’s dissertation. Another indicator of such a bias is to be found in his justification of the Northern habit of calling Southerners ‘abeed’ (an Arabic word for ‘slave’). Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 96.

²⁴⁹ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Prime Minister, Sirr El Khatim El Khalifa (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

decision to handle the conflict mainly as a security matter fuelled the conflict to an unprecedented extent.²⁵¹

The Southern delegates at the RTC claimed that their hostility towards the Arab Northern elite originated from several factors, one of them being the lack of development that the region had suffered from since independence. In this issue Aggrey Jaden went into a most detailed description of the measures undertaken to develop the South, and stated that “By the actions of the Government, Southerners can only conclude that their land is to remain undeveloped. The colonial government was very slow in developing the South; but since independence almost no progress at all can be recorded.”²⁵²

One of the thorniest issues in the relationship between Northerners and Southerners, and certainly the most important one in fuelling hostility in the South towards the North, was the Sudanese history of slave trade. The slave trade had been a constant and devastating factor in the societies of the Southern Sudan particularly since the mid-19th Century and the participation by Northerners in that trade was still not forgotten by the Southern people. The main reason why this was still so important to the Southerners was, as the Southern Front put it, that “nothing has been done to demonstrate clearly a change of heart among the responsible offspring of those who were responsible for it”.²⁵³ The speeches of SANU(inside) and SANU(outside) were equally concerned with this issue, although the parties differed on what consequence –federation or separation –should be drawn from that historical experience.

According to the Southern delegates, another historic event that had fuelled Southern suspicion towards the intentions of the Northerners was the promise Southerners had been given on the eve of independence, of considering a federated status for the South. William Deng claimed that this broken promise had become a proof to Southerners of

²⁵¹ This claim has been supported by various researchers. R.O. Collins, for instance, has stated that the Southern conflict did not exist until the ‘Abboud regime decided to handle Southern discontent militarily. R.O. Collins 2007: 23.

²⁵² Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Aggrey Jaden ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁵³ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Southern Front ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

the intentions of Northern Sudanese to dominate and assimilate the Southern population.²⁵⁴

The speeches of the Southern Front and SANU (outside) also particularly stressed that the process towards independence as well as the ten years since it was proclaimed, had only given them further reasons to mistrust the Northern educated elite, by making unforgivable mistakes that had made restoration of trust between the parties almost impossible.

The Northern delegates at the RTC stressed that the slave trade was not a history of one-way abuse: Southerners, British, Egyptians and Northern (Arab) Sudanese were equally involved in the trade. Northern delegates argued that whatever responsibility should be put upon the shoulders of earlier generations of Northern Muslims, the present generation would certainly not defend nor take part of any such practice, and therefore the hostility among the Southern delegates were unjust and misplaced. The real responsibility lay on the British, and their 'Southern policy', the Northerners claimed. This policy had grave consequences for the image of Northerners among the Southern population, as it isolated the Southern region, refused Northerners access, refused developmental measures such as education and the modernisation of their economy, and restricted the preaching of Islam and the spread of the Arab culture there. This denied development in the Southern region equal to that of the rest of the country. The Juba Conference was seen by the Northern delegates as a "turning point in the relationship between North and South"²⁵⁵, and all the Northern introductory speeches stated that the direction of that relationship was finally decided by the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1953. From then on, the Northerners said, it was settled that Northern and Southern Sudan would be one united country after independence.

All the Northern parties concluded that the backwardness of the Southern region was inherited by them from the British, and not the main responsibility of the Northerners. Quite the contrary, the Northerners had strived to even out those unjust developmental differences inflicted on the country by the British, and made serious attempts to end

²⁵⁴ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: William Deng ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁵⁵ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Sadik El Mahdi for the Umma Party ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

the hostilities in the South towards the North since independence. As a delegate of the Professionals' Front stated:

“So since 1947 the Sudan, North and South, had been striving to achieve independence until their efforts were crowned with success at the beginning of 1956. And despite the hardship we had experienced in 1955 due to the mutiny, the northern Sudanese had been in full realisation of the immense problem they had inherited and had, therefore, been trying to provide a solution for it by peaceful means [...]”²⁵⁶

Nevertheless, it is possible to trace some nuances in-between the Northern parties in this issue. Firstly, the inauguration speech of Khalifa, although briefly and vaguely, criticized the Northern governments of the 1950's for their lack of success in addressing the problem adequately. Sadiq al-Mahdi (Umma Party) blamed the Northern government of 1953-56 (the aforementioned NUP-government led by al-Azhari²⁵⁷) of neglecting Southern grievances, and consequently disrupting North-South trust and cooperation after independence.²⁵⁸ For the post-1956 governments, though, Sadiq claimed, in line with his Northern compatriots, that it had been the intent of the Northerners to consider a federated solution for the South, but this process was interrupted by the military coup in 1958.²⁵⁹ Similarly, al-Azhari (NUP) claimed that the NUP and the other Northern parties had taken their pledge to consider federation for the South seriously, though the 1958 military coup interrupted the constitutional work that would have solved that question.²⁶⁰

The speech of Sadiq al-Mahdi was a particularly detailed review of the history of North-South relationship since the 19th Century. Sadiq stressed particularly the penetration of Islam and the Arab culture and the Arabic language as processes of cultural exchange: “This exchange had a bright and civilizing side which tried to spread the religion and [sic] the North and Arabic language; but its evil, dark side was

²⁵⁶ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Professionals' Front ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁵⁷ See Chapter 2 above, page 49.

²⁵⁸ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Sadik El Mahdi for the Umma Party ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁵⁹ Obviously, it was difficult for the Umma Party to admit responsibility for the discontent in the South. The British, the NUP government of 1953-56 and the military regime of 'Abboud were conveniently blamed –an indication that the April elections probably diverted Sadiq's strategy at the RTC.

²⁶⁰ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: N.U.P. - El Azhari ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

slavery.”²⁶¹ As the spread of the Islamic religion and the Arab culture and the Arabic language was claimed to be a “bright and civilizing” effect of intercultural exchange between North and South, the spread of Christianity and Western culture in the South was seen as imperialist policies aiming at suppression and subjugation of the Sudanese people: “(...) European Imperialism had a crusading aspect that largely affected the directions it took and the organised way in which it imposed its language and culture cannot be ignored.”²⁶²

Claiming good intentions and indeed giving some concessions to their responsibility for the conflict and the need for a change in the relationship between Northern and Southern Sudan, the Northern delegates were unanimous on the issues of unity and national identity. Although they admitted the Sudan was an Afro-Arab nation, the civilizing and enlightening effect of Arabization and Islamization in Sudan particularly and in Africa in general, came up as an issue in all the Northern introductory speeches. Concluding from the history of the Sudan, the People’s Democratic Party clearly stated their view of what Sudanese national unity should be built upon in the future:

“Arabism which prevails over Sudan does not rest on any racialism [...]; the homogeneity of Arabism constitutes our common feelings, enshrines our joint history, nourishes the uniformity of our culture and sustains the integrity of our legacy; all these entities are reflected on our lingua franca as a mirror image.”²⁶³

Certainly, such statements did not contribute to assure the Southern delegates of the future status of African cultures and religions in a united Sudan.

Unity or Separation

The Southern delegates claimed that the decision to unite Northern and Southern Sudan had been a result of British imperialist interests: “As usual with Britain, [...] she imposes unity where it is not wanted and divides where unity is demanded as it suits her imperial interests”, Gordon Mortat stated in his introductory speech on

²⁶¹ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Sadik El Mahdi for the Umma Party ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: People's Democratic Party ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

behalf of the Southern Front.²⁶⁴ Mortat's claim was nevertheless that the Northerners could not hide behind the failures of colonial policies: "Unfortunately the attitude adopted by the National Governments toward the South since 1954 has not faired any better; indeed it can be described as having been instrumental to our present difficulties."²⁶⁵

All Southern parties at the RTC agreed that the Juba Conference of 1947 was invalid as historical evidence of Sudanese unity.²⁶⁶ As every Southerner at the Juba Conference had been handpicked by the British they had no proper mandate to represent the Southern population, the Southern delegates stated. Without such a mandate, nobody could be said to have the legal right to take a decision which were of such importance for the future of 3-4 million people. Hence, that conference could not be perceived as legally binding. Aggrey Jaden stated that the British had already decided in favour of unity before the Juba Conference, and William Deng, the most modest of the Southern representatives, said: "[...] it is surprising to find educated Northern Sudanese arguing that the South had opted to unite with the North at that Conference."²⁶⁷ Southern delegates also claimed that those Southerners who in 1947 agreed to consider unity, had changed their minds after witnessing the consequences that decision had for the region.

As for the ultimate solution of the country, the issue of unity or separation, the Southern parties diverged. SANU(inside) argued in favour of unity, although within a federated system of government, with significant powers transferred to the Southern Regional government. The Southern Front and SANU(outside) wanted separation.

The Northern delegates argued that Northern and Southern Sudan shared a common historical legacy, and thus was intended to stay one united country. They considered it a question of choice between a peaceful solution implying unity and a violent solution implying the possibility of separation. Separation was not considered possible within

²⁶⁴ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Southern Front ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ For information of the Juba Conference, see Chapter 1 above.

²⁶⁷ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Aggrey Jaden ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents) and Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: William Deng ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

a peaceful solution. As the PDP leader, Ali Abdel Rahman stated in his introductory speech: “We are ready to contribute to the planning of the necessary steps should the Conference declare that the Sudan is an indivisible unity with its present boundaries [sic]; and at the same time the Conference has to expunge from its dictionary these two words, namely Separation and Federation.”²⁶⁸ The Northern delegates argued in favour of a centralised system of government based on OAU principles of African unity because that would be the most efficient system, economically as well as administratively. Also considering the present situation, i.e. that the Sudan was a poor country, they concluded that the state could not afford to spend such resources on mere administration. Additionally, the Northern delegates considered both the proposed federal solution and the suggested elections, as being concealed attempts by the Southerners to achieve their ultimate aim of separation.

The Foreign Observers

In spite of the insistence by the Northerners on the national nature of the conflict, foreign observers were invited to the RTC. The initiative for their invitation was taken in William Deng’s letter to the Transitional government, in which one of the preconditions for the convening of a round-table conference was the presence of foreign observers from fellow African countries.²⁶⁹ The Northerners, then, suggested inviting Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Algeria and the United Arab Republic (Egypt).²⁷⁰ The daily newspaper *Al-Rai Al-A’am* reported that the Northern parties by inviting foreign observers wanted to provide the Southerners assurance of their good intents, to assure African countries of Sudanese commitment to African unity and to offer the observers the opportunity to influence and soften the separatist ideals among the Southerners.²⁷¹

The countries that sent observers to the RTC were Ghana, Kenya, Algeria, Tanzania, United Arab Republic (Egypt), Nigeria and Uganda.²⁷² These countries all faced

²⁶⁸ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: People's Democratic Party ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁶⁹ Deng, William, 1964: "Letter from Sudan African National Union (Sanu) to Prime Minister of the Sudan on Political Relations between North and South." Appendix no. 10 in M.O. Beshir 1968.

²⁷⁰ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 84.

²⁷¹ *Al-Rai Al-A’am* 6 February, 1965, as quoted in Ibid.

²⁷² "Delegates at the Round-Table Conference on the South" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents) and "Observers from African Countries" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

somewhat similar problems, although on diverse scales, and the observers generally expressed common interest with the Northern Sudanese in maintaining African unity. One author describes that the observers functioned as “[...] tacitly at least, a useful support for the Northern parties.”²⁷³

In a speech on behalf of the RTC observers given at the second meeting, on 17 March, Mr. Welbeck, the Ghanaian Minister of Information defined their general view on their role at the Conference, when he said: “We have come here to offer our services to all parties concerned. We have not come here to dictate you terms as members or Ministers of a Government [...]”²⁷⁴ This speech demonstrates how the initial intent of the observers was to assist the parties and obtain knowledge of the Sudanese conflict, though not to intervene in the negotiations by putting pressure on any of the parties.

The observers held few powers to put pressure on the negotiating parties or provide security guarantees that may have motivated the parties for making concessions and introducing compromises. Nonetheless, as negotiations developed and became gradually more difficult, their initial strategy was somewhat changed, and they began intervening more directly in the negotiations.²⁷⁵ Unfortunately, this intervention did not address any of the core issues to the conflict, but rather disagreements over procedure and emotional engagement based on mutual suspicion. For instance, at the fourth RTC meeting, on March 19, the observers asked for a meeting with the heads of each party.²⁷⁶ At this meeting they encouraged the parties to handle the problem as one of underdevelopment, and gave some examples of how their own countries had strived with similar problems. Moreover, they insisted that any separatist solution should be excluded, as Salih states; “The Uganda Observer said he did not know how the problem would be solved; however, that should be peacefully, within unity and as soon as possible.”²⁷⁷ Thus, the foremost means of pressure undertaken by the observers was underlining their opposition to a separatist solution, which they claimed would threaten African unity.

²⁷³ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 85.

²⁷⁴ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Mr. Welbeck from Ghana (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

²⁷⁵ Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 102-103.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.: 122.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.: 124.

Through five days, the political parties made their speeches, although interrupted by discussions and disagreements: According to the Northern newspaper 'Advance', "much delay was owing to discussions over questions of procedure".²⁷⁸ This was indeed true, as it had become evening, 21 March, before the two sides were prepared to present their proposals to the Conference.²⁷⁹

Southern Schemes of Proposals²⁸⁰

The Southern parties came up with two slightly different proposals for the RTC to consider. The first one was rejected by the Northerners, on the basis that it was "separatist".²⁸¹ After studying the Northern proposals, the Southern delegates made some adjustments to their original scheme, which they allegedly wanted to function as a reconciliatory proposal, expecting the Northerners would take an equally conciliatory stance, to go into negotiations on the issues in which they differed.²⁸² This did not happen. The Northern delegates never came up with alternative proposals. The RTC was fixed in a deadlock, and many issues remained unresolved and were referred to further discussion by the Twelve-Man Committee (TMC).

The first SANU/Southern Front proposal underlined the importance of complete regional control of finance and economic planning, foreign affairs, the armed forces as well as internal security. The background for these demands was, according to the proposal, the experience of the policies of the past 10 years of independence. Because none of the various Khartoum Governments since independence had managed to secure the interests of the Southern region adequately, SANU and the Southern Front

²⁷⁸ "Advance", March 23, 1965, as quoted in "From Northern Sudan Arab Papers" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁷⁹ Salih accounts for these discussions in more detail. See Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 103-126.

²⁸⁰ Schemes of Proposals and Resolutions at the Round-Table Conference of Khartoum: First Proposals by the Southern Delegation ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents), and Schemes of Proposals and Resolutions at the Round-Table Conference of Khartoum: Scheme of Proposals by Sanu and Southern Front ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁸¹ Schemes of Proposals and Resolutions at the Round-Table Conference of Khartoum: Reply to the Scheme by the Southern Representatives ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

²⁸² Deng D. Akol Ruay 1994: 115. According to Ruay (who is a member of the SPLM/SPLA) it was the fact that the Northern delegates never came up with a second proposal that put the RTC in a deadlock. Mohamed O. Beshir, a Northern academic who were head of the RTC Secretariat, disagrees strongly with Ruay, and claims that the reason for the deadlock was that the Southerners were "bad negotiators", and did not meet the Northerners half way. See Mohamed Omer Beshir 1968: 96.

proposed that the region itself should be in control of these institutions.²⁸³ Their proposal argued in favour of a “voluntary union” between the North and the South, which would have in common some institutions, as infrastructure, transport and agreements on free movement of people, services and goods.

This proposal also suggested Southern elections, with three possible outcomes: Federation, unity with the North or separation “(to become an independent state)”.²⁸⁴ In their second proposal, the Southerners included as a fourth possible choice: “Regional government”, which implied the constitutional and administrative systems suggested by the Northerners. The Northerners rejected any elections that opened for secession, as they suspected these suggestions were covered attempts by the Southern politicians to achieve separation. The first proposals of the Southerners also asked for the lifting of the state of emergency, that all Southern public officials be transferred to the South and that a commission should be set up “to select suitable Northern administrators to work in the South where there are no Southerners to fill the posts.”²⁸⁵ The Northerners agreed that lifting the state of emergency and Southernization of the regions’ administration were necessary, but rejected that such measures were possible in the existing circumstances, with fighting still going on between the Anya-Nya and the National Army. They were consistent in their demand that the fighting had to stop and the rebels had to lay down their arms, before any political measures were possible to implement.

Northern Scheme of Proposals²⁸⁶

The Northerners argued that the first proposal from the Southern delegates was an outright demand for separation –or at the least keeping the door open for separation at any time, by the wish of the Southern leadership –and this was not an issue that was negotiable. They based their proposal on their views that neither a centralized nor a federal solution was applicable in Sudan. The military regime of ‘Abboud had, according to them, proved to the Sudanese people that a centralized system of

²⁸³ Schemes of Proposals and Resolutions at the Round-Table Conference of Khartoum: First Proposals by the Southern Delegation (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Schemes of Proposals and Resolutions at the Round-Table Conference of Khartoum: Scheme of Proposals by the Northern Political Parties (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

government led to military resistance in the South, based on “legitimate wishes for local autonomy”.²⁸⁷ This uprising, the proposal argued, could be ended through allowing regional authorities to have decisive power in local affairs. Likewise, a federal system of government was rejected, on the reasons that it was a too expensive system for a country as poor as Sudan, and also that Northern Sudanese felt “that federation was a step towards separation (...).”²⁸⁸

The Northern proposals contained, rather, a system they called ‘Regional Government’. Under this system the executive powers were shared between the Regional and the Central authorities. The Regional government was given the power to regulate a number of issues, under the condition they should be subject to national legislation. The list of powers given to the Regional government included establishment and administration of elementary schools, sports and arts events and museums and libraries, all health services except hospitals, land use and flood prevention, animal protection and preservation establishment of local and through roads, sewage systems, water, electricity and power supply, village planning, and “Recruitment and use of local police subject to the right of the Central Government to take over when necessary.”²⁸⁹

Powers to be retained by the Central government were, among others, foreign relations, control of the army and police forces, as well as taxation and natural resources. All these issues were rejected by the Southerners, claiming that if any real power sharing principles were to be implemented, regional control of these matters were of crucial importance: “The experience of the last decade has shown that tranquillity and economic progress cannot be achieved unless the South has complete control of: a) Finance and Economic Planning b) Foreign Affairs c) Armed Forces d) Internal Security (police and prisons)”.²⁹⁰

The Northern proposal also guaranteed the Southern region a representation in Parliament proportionate to its population as compared with the rest of the country,

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Schemes of Proposals and Resolutions at the Round-Table Conference of Khartoum: Scheme of Proposals by Sanu and Southern Front ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

that the position of Vice-President should always be given to a Southerner, and that at least three of the Ministers in Cabinet should be Southerners. Religious freedom and equalization of wages and opportunities of employment was guaranteed, as well as freedom of movement and the establishment of a university in the South.

The proposal listed five “urgent measures” to be taken, which should precede the implementation of the new system of government: Cessation of violence and the handling over of arms prior to the lifting of the state of emergency; the repatriation and rehabilitation of refugees (from Uganda especially²⁹¹); Southernization of the administration whenever qualified Southerners were available; resettlement of dislocated civilians in the South; and immediate steps to allay famine the South. The first of these constituted one of the most debated issues of the Conference, and was one of the issues that were not agreed upon, neither at the RTC nor during the 48 meetings of the Twelve-Man Committee that followed it. The Southerners argued that the armed uprising in the South was a result of the lack of measures taken by the central government to share its power. Therefore, they argued, it would be impossible for the politicians to disarm the rebels *prior to* the implementation of the required power-sharing principles.²⁹² They suggested a “Programme for Immediate Implementations”, which contained the Southernization of the country’s administration, police corps and prison wardens, directorship of Southern education as well as the Information service.²⁹³ This proposal was rejected by the Northerners, who argued that the main immediate task had to be the ending of Anya-Nya violence, before any political programme could be implemented.

The ‘Special Minute’

On 29 March 1965, the day before the closing session of the RTC it was decided to appoint a Twelve-Man Committee (TMC) that would continue the work of the RTC on the issues that the latter had failed to agree upon. Seemingly, the conferees had come to a kind of ‘silent agreement’ about the most basic conflict of the RTC; the one

²⁹¹ The Sudanese and the Ugandan governments had prior to the RTC reached an agreement on the repatriation of Sudanese refugees that had fled into Uganda because of the civil war.

²⁹² R.O. Collins’ Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections’ Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 Minutes of the second meeting held Thursday, May 27th, 1965. No. 76. So. 1/22/251.

²⁹³ Schemes of Proposals and Resolutions at the Round-Table Conference of Khartoum: Scheme of Proposals by Sanu and Southern Front (“Sudan Informazioni” News Agency documents).

concerning unity or separation for the Southern region. Both Beshir and Salih states that while the Northerners continued to insist upon unity, the separatist Southerners had realised that their counterpart would never agree to separation.²⁹⁴ Nonetheless, none of the parties insisted upon stating this agreement explicitly in public, especially the Southerners, who feared that the Southern movement would disintegrate even further if it became clear to everyone that the RTC delegates had agreed to rule out separation.²⁹⁵

Thus, agreement was made to draw a secret 'Special Minute', which was signed by Yosif Mohamed Ali, who was eventually going to be the Chairman of the TMC. It stated that the TMC would attempt to agree on a constitutional and administrative system suitable to the Sudan, and although this would not be officially declared, it was a clear understanding among the RTC delegates that "The terms of the said committee do not include the consideration of the two extremes –that is to say, separation and the *status quo*."²⁹⁶

The Round-Table Conference Resolutions

The introduction of the RTC Resolutions announced that the Conference had reached agreement on three issues: The importance of national conciliation; that solving the differences of the parties was still possible; and that peaceful means was the only way to solve the conflict.²⁹⁷ Drawing from these considerations, the resolutions listed a range of measures that were agreed upon by the delegates and thus should be implemented by the Sudanese government.

This included a list of practical measures that would contribute to "normalise the situation in the South": Resettlement of Ugandan refugees, diplomatic efforts should be directed towards other neighbouring countries, aiming to reach agreements for settlement of all refugees in those countries, resettlement of internal refugees, making requests to the Sudanese government to make efforts for alleviating famine by

²⁹⁴ Mohamed Omer Beshir, 1975: 12, and Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 173.

²⁹⁵ Mohamed Omer Beshir, 1975: 12.

²⁹⁶ As quoted in Ibid.: 13.

²⁹⁷ Resolutions of the Round-Table Conference on the South. ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents). All quotes in this section is taken from this document, unless else is stated.

investigating its “inherent causes” and making necessary steps to hinder it in the future, and lastly, the retransfer of all Southern schools in the North back to the South.

The Resolutions followed up this by giving 13 points of “lines of policy” that should be adopted by the Sudanese government. These recommended that Southerners should be given training for and jobs in Southern police and prisons, administration, the military, public health, forest officers and games and fisheries officers, and additionally that they should receive wages equal to those of their Northern counterparts. These issues were not mentioned in the Northern Scheme of Proposals, as similar suggestions were in fact rejected by the Northern delegates when proposed by the Southerners, on the reason that the most urgent task at that time was the disarmament of the Anya-Nya. Nevertheless, these measures were in the RTC Resolutions proposed as the three initial points in a list of “lines of policy” recommended to the government.

Additionally, a fourth point of agreement that was recommended to be adopted as a line of policy by the government was the establishment of freedom of religion and missionary activities “within the laws of the land”. Fifthly, it was recommended to allow any private person or organisation to open schools, and sixthly it was recommended to allow freedom of movement throughout the country. Points seven and eight recommended the opening of a University as well as Girls’ Secondary schools in the South and an Agricultural school in Malakal. It was also recommended to re-open the Yambio Agricultural school, Juba Training Centre and Malakal Veterinary Centre, and that all Southern schools were to be headed by “qualified Southerners”. In this respect, it was specifically underlined that Arabic-skills were not to be required for promotions to top jobs in educational institutions. The following lines of policies recommended for adoption by the government were to find jobs for the unemployed and national and regional councils to speed up economic development, nationally as well as regionally. Under the latter point it was recommended that the government take into consideration different developmental schemes presented from 1954 onwards. The Azande scheme in particular was recommended to be taken into consideration. Lastly, it was recommended that the government should give “priority and facilities to the local population in the exploitation of land.”

In the Resolutions the delegates declared their determination to resolve the conflict and execute the policies agreed upon. They also declared their preparedness “to go into a peace campaign to tour the South, to pacify and normalize” and that they would make serious attempts to end the violence within a timescale of 2 months.

It was declared that the delegates had not come to agreement on any suitable constitutional and administrative system for the country, and that this task was referred to a Twelve-Man Committee, which was to end its work within three months. The conference was nevertheless depicted a success in some respects; in giving the political leaders the possibility to meet and present to each other, and to the observers from neighbouring countries, their grievances and views; in calming suspicions and establishing a basis for understanding between the parties; and lastly, in informing the civilian population in the entire country of the facts, in order to enable them to, as formulated in the RTC report: “appreciate the problem and see it in its true perspective.”

CHAPTER 4: THE TWELVE-MAN COMMITTEE

The Resolutions of the Round-Table Conference (RTC) appointed the Twelve-Man Committee (TMC), intending it to spend three months to propose a constitutional and administrative set-up for the country which would prepare both parties to put down their weapons and cooperate to establish law and order in the South. From the beginning, though, these intentions were not given top priority by Sudanese politicians.

The work of the TMC was supposed to begin immediately after the end of the RTC, and it was supposed to finish its work within 3 months.²⁹⁸ Nevertheless, it took nearly two months from the conclusion of the RTC until the first TMC meeting. The reason for this was given to be that the government and the Northern politicians were preoccupied with the General Elections, which were conducted in April.²⁹⁹ As will be argued in this thesis, this is only one of the indications that the conclusion of the civil war was not considered the most important issue by the responsible actors in the conflict. No matter how sincere Prime Minister Khalifa might have been on this issue, his engagement in solving the civil war peacefully did not rub off on the Northern politicians who succeeded him in power. The Southerners, on the other hand, were militarily and politically stronger than ever, and had seemingly no intention to stop the warfare on the basis of an uncertain peace treaty.

Elections and Political Confusion

Elections were held in Northern Sudan 21 April, 1965, resulting in a coalition government formed by NUP and the Umma Party.³⁰⁰ Mohammed Ahmed Mahgoub gained the premiership, and the new government took office 14 June, 1965. PDP boycotted these elections, and formed, together with SCP, who had gained only 8

²⁹⁸ Recommendations of the 12-Man Committee to the Chairman of the Round Table Conference in the South. June 1966.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 75.

seats in Parliament,³⁰¹ the Socialist Democratic Group, which was an opposition group protesting against the Maghoub government.³⁰²

Due to the continuing and increasingly intensifying warfare, elections were suspended in the South, leaving unanswered the question as to which political party was the most representative of Southern public opinion. Nonetheless, the Southern parties in Khartoum managed to negotiate conditions enabling them to keep the representation that they had in the Transitional Government.³⁰³ Mahgoub proposed to give SANU (inside), the Southern Front and the Liberal Party one Minister each, but while claiming to be the major representative of the Southern people, both SANU (inside) and the Southern Front demanded all three seats. The Southern Front stated that they declined “cocktail representation of the Southern parties in the Coalition Government”, thus rejecting their position, which was then handed over to SANU (inside).³⁰⁴ Andrew Wieu and Alfred Wol from SANU (inside) were then given two Ministries in the government, but both withdrew because they rejected the participation of the third Southern Minister that Mahgoub appointed; Buth Diu from the Liberal Party.³⁰⁵ Consequently, in the end, the Southern party with probably the narrowest support-base of them all were the only one represented in the first Mahgoub government.

The Mahgoub governments (June 1965-July 1966 and May 1967-May 1969) chose force as the main remedy for solving the conflict, and thus, as has been repeatedly suggested, signalled that they had learnt nothing from the conduct of previous governments towards the South.³⁰⁶ Mahgoub consistently labelled the Anya-Nyas ‘terrorists’, and was insistent on the need to fight them by force.³⁰⁷ Statements Mahgoub made in the press and elsewhere about the civil war and the government’s approach to it repeatedly frustrated the work of the TMC. As shown in this study, the

³⁰¹ Bechtold 1976: 232.

³⁰² Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 197.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*: 180.

³⁰⁴ “The Vigilant”, 16 June, 1965, as quoted in *Ibid.*: 181.

³⁰⁵ Edgar O’Ballance 1977: 76. Although no elections were conducted to formally prove such an allegation, it is widely accepted that Buth Diu had only a very narrow support-base in the South, and that the insistence of Northern politicians on the representation by him and other Southern unionists was merely attempts to confuse the image of Southern public opinion. For a more thorough discussion of this issue, see Chapter 2 above.

³⁰⁶ See for instance R.O. Collins 2007: 46, and Dunstan M. Wai in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973: 153.

³⁰⁷ This is clearly seen in Mohamed Ahmed Mahgoub 1974.

Prime Minister's conduct towards the work of the TMC fuelled the distrust among Southerners and hardened the forces at the negotiating table.

While keeping representatives in the TMC, and thus seemingly trying to make peace through political compromises, all the Northern parties in the National Assembly voted in favour of the military offensive that was conducted in the South during summer 1965. The gravest incidents in the South during the work of the TMC were the massacres in Juba on 8 July and in Wau on 12 July, 1965. Both have in retrospect been claimed to have been deliberate military actions aiming at slaughtering educated Southerners.³⁰⁸ If that allegation was true, it is certainly safe to say that both offensives were successful in that respect: The massacre in Juba killed some 1400 Southerners, many of whom were among the educated Southern elite, and in Wau four days later, 76 educated Southerners were killed. R.O. Collins suggests that it is likely that the military offensive in the South enjoyed support by Northerners in general, although without realising the huge suffering those policies inflicted on the Southern civilian population.³⁰⁹ One example of such support is given in a series of political articles printed in the Newspaper *Al-Ayam* in April and May, 1965.³¹⁰

25 July, 1966 the young Sadiq al-Mahdi, nephew of the Imam Hadi Abdal Rahman al-Mahdi, instigated a successful vote of no confidence against Mahgoub, and subsequently gained the premiership for little less than a year. Sadiq's policies towards the South were somewhat more conciliatory than those of Mahgoub, attempting for instance to put some restraint on the conduct of the army towards civilians. He gained some support among some Southerners because of this, especially from William Deng's SANU (inside), who joined his government as part of a coalition.³¹¹ Sadiq was quite controversial even in religio-political issues, arguing in favour of a secular government unrestricted by sectarian influences. He also, at least formally, adopted a more positive attitude towards the TMC, as he reportedly

³⁰⁸ R.O. Collins 2007: 47.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ "Arab Criticism on the Round-Table Conference" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

³¹¹ Edgar O'Ballance 1977: 90.

described the work of the TMC as “the only serious task that was done during the last eight months, which deserves being proud of.”³¹²

Nevertheless, his government did little to implement the TMC resolutions and never reconvened the RTC, as agreed to by the parties in March 1965. Instead, an ‘All-Parties Conference’ was convened in November 1966, after which the Constitution Committee began its work, which ultimately ended in a proposed Islamic Constitution.³¹³ These Committees were unsuccessfully resisted, and eventually boycotted, by the Southern political leadership. Sadiq never managed to mobilise his supporters into sufficient action on behalf of his vision of a secular Umma Party, and the Umma Party split became increasingly more threatening to his power until he ultimately lost this power-struggle and had to return the premiership to Mahgoub in May 1967. Mahgoub returned to his previous policies, reinstating in the South the emergency laws that Sadiq had abandoned.³¹⁴ Consequently, warfare in the South increased, and the possibilities of implementing a compromise deal diminished, as events in the South increased recruitment and support of the Anya-Nya among Southern civilians.

This was the political context of which the members of the TMC spent 48 meetings spread over more than a year, debating a possible constitutional and administrative basis on which to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. Throughout 1965 and 1966, the situation in the South developed more and more into a regular civil war, with heavy fighting between the armed forces and the increasingly coordinated guerrilla movement.

³¹² Sadiq al-Mahdi, as quoted in Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 201.

³¹³ Sadiq was gradually pushed in direction of the Islamic ideology relentlessly pursued by other forces within the Northern Sudanese political leadership. He was part of the 1968 Constitutional Committee, which, against vigorous protests from Southerners, agreed to propose an Islamic Constitution for the country. During his next term in the office of Prime Minister (1986-1989), he pursued just as provocative policies towards the South as former civilian governments had done, and cooperated closely with the Islamist party the National Islamic Front.

³¹⁴ Among these were allowing the army to confiscate livestock, destroy crops and shoot civilians at random in so-called ‘fire-free zones’. See Dunstan M. Wai in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.) 1973: 153, and Edgar O’Ballance 1977: 90.

The Work of the Twelve-Man Committee

The ultimate aim was that the TMC and eventually a reconvened Round-Table Conference, should agree on a working democratic system that would fulfil the aspirations of both sides to the extent which was needed to secure a lasting peace. Additionally, the TMC was meant to function as a “watch committee” on behalf of the RTC, to follow up the elected government on its implementation of the measures that were so far recommended. Lastly, the Committee was supposed to agree on practically oriented plans on three issues: How to normalize conditions; what measures to implement to be able to lift the state of emergency; and the procedures for establishing law and order in the South.³¹⁵ These were all difficult tasks, and they were not made easier by the decision that all resolutions had to be passed unanimously. This decision put the TMC in a number of difficult and indeed some dead-locked situations that harmed the legitimacy of the Committee and its trust among the Sudanese people, both in the South and in the North.³¹⁶ It has nevertheless been argued that this was the best possible solution considering the need for national consensus on the issues that were to be solved.³¹⁷

Legitimacy of the TMC Members

The first meeting of the Twelve-Man Committee (TMC) was held 22 May, 1965. The Committee held 48 meetings altogether, the last one on 12 June, 1966. The Twelve Men were Hassan al-Turabi (Islamic Charter Front); Mohamed Ahmed El Mardi (National Unionist Party); al-Fatih Abboud (Peoples Democratic Party); Abdulla al-Sayed (Professional’s Front); Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud (Sudanese Communist Party); Mohamed Daawood al-Khalifa (UMMA Party); Hilary U. Akwong (SANU); Nekanora Aguer (SANU); Andrew W. Riang Wieu (SANU); Natale Olwak (Southern

³¹⁵ R.O. Collins’ Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections’ Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 Special Session held Saturday, 11 September, 1965. No. 90. Appendix F. So. 1/30/272.

³¹⁶ For instance, the TMC never managed to agree on whether to condemn the violent actions: The Southerners refused to agree to a condemnation that condemned Anya-Nya violence but not the violence of the Army, and the Northerners refused to condemn the Army for doing its job. This question was taken up for the first time at the second TMC meeting, and then discussed again at a number of meetings, but every time with the same conclusion –that they could not come to any agreement. Ibid. No. 76 So. 1/22/251. Twelve Man Committee Minutes of the Second meeting held on Thursday, 27 May, 1965.

³¹⁷ Abel Alier 1990: 40.

Front); Bona Malwal W. Ring (Southern Front); and Gordon Abiei Makwac (Southern Front).³¹⁸

The first meeting was initiated by a speech to the members by Prime Minister Khalifa. He informed the Committee of its terms of reference, and stated that the security situation in the South still was unsatisfying, and violence was still on the increase. He added that the government had begun implementing the RTC resolutions. Subsequent to the Prime Minister's speech, the discussions began. The initial debate revolved around the Southern representation in the committee, as rivalries inside SANU was still not settled, and the Southern Front complained, on behalf of SANU(outside), that the latter should be given seats in the Committee. The protest of SANU(outside) was based in their view that William Deng, Andrew Wieu and Nekanora Aguer were not legitimate representatives of SANU, as they had been dismissed from the party, and did not have the mandate to represent it in the Committee.³¹⁹ Bona Malwal of the Southern Front supported this allegation, probably because their views would gain more weight were the SANU(outside) part of the committee, as their opinions concurred with the Southern Front on the most crucial issues. Nevertheless, Peter Akol, who was sent to Khartoum by SANU(outside) to attend as their member of the TMC, was rejected, and the Southern representatives throughout the process ended up to be SANU(inside) and the Southern Front, thus excluding completely the political exile movement. The Northern parties demanded that if SANU(outside) was to send members to the TMC they had to register as a political party inside the country and renounce their aim of a separatist solution. Santino Deng from the Sudan Unity Party also made an attempt to be represented in the TMC, but was turned down by both of the Prime Minister and the TMC, on the ground that the party had been excluded from active representation in the RTC negotiations.³²⁰

³¹⁸ R.O. Collins' Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections' Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 Minutes of the First Meeting held Saturday, 22 May, 1965. So. 1/21/247.

³¹⁹ This was the claim of Peter Akol, when he arrived in the 6th TMC meeting on 14 June, 1965. Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 194. For a more detailed introduction to the SANU conflict, see Chapter 2 above.

³²⁰ Ibid.: 193.

Internal Disintegration

At the 2nd meeting, the TMC members discussed the role and work of the Committee, and how it should relate to the continued violence in the South. This issue would prove to become a disintegrating factor in the Committee, as the violence increased and the TMC members never got through to the combatants to make them commit themselves to a cease-fire. The Southerners said that the Committee was responsible for coming to an agreement on practical measures that could lead to a cease-fire.³²¹ Such discussions never convinced the SCP and PDP, though, and the lack of a cease-fire eventually led to the withdrawal of those two Northern parties.

On 21 June, 1965, the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) announced that they wanted to withdraw from the Committee and call for the freezing of the RTC resolutions. The party sent a delegate to some meetings throughout the summer, but delivered a letter finally confirming their withdrawal 19 August, 1965.³²² The reason they gave was the continued violence in the South. They argued that the activities of the RTC/TMC should be frozen and that peace should be established “as an initial condition for seeking a peaceful democratic solution”.³²³ This letter also stated firmly that the SCP did not condemn Anya-Nya violence one-sidedly, but even the military offensive in the South by the national army. As long as both parties to the conflict resorted to violence, the TMC would be unable to make any difference, it was claimed. In July, the PDP also withdrew from the TMC. Their letter explained their withdrawal by the continued violence in the South, and stated that the security situation made it impossible to find a political solution to the conflict. It also brought up the three-month time limit that the TMC was given by the RTC, and pointed to the fact that this time-limit had expired.³²⁴ The remaining members of the TMC wrote a press release in September, stating their reactions and counterarguments towards the withdrawals. These were mainly concerned with the terms of reference of the TMC, as well as arguing that the insufficient security situation in the South was the main reason for the

³²¹ This was suggested by Bona Malwal (Southern Front) on behalf of the Southern parties at the 2nd TMC meeting on 27 May, 1965, according to Ibid.: 196.

³²² R.O. Collins' Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections' Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 No. 92. So.1/30/269. “Letter of giving reasons for Communist Party’s withdrawal, (In Arabic) 19 August, 1965.”

³²³ Ibid. No. 92. So. 1/30/269. “Letter giving reasons for Communist Party’s withdrawal, (In Arabic) 19 August, 1965.”

³²⁴ Ibid. No. 91. So. 1/28/264. Letter of Withdrawal of Peoples Democratic Party, 20 July, 1965.

peace initiative, and hence continued violence was an insufficient reason for withdrawal:

“The bad condition of security in the South was the main reason for calling the conference and forming the committee. It is not reasonable then that its existence will have to depend on a change of the state of affairs beforehand. We all condemn violence. But violence should not be given as a reason for boycotting the committee, Ignoring the national duty of reaching a solution which is the only way of finally making an end to violence.”³²⁵

This statement may be the closest the TMC came to agreeing to condemnation of violence. The statement also urged the SCP and PDP to reconsider and carry on their work in the TMC.

Security Debates

It seems that the TMC discussions over security measures worked to fuel feelings of enmity and distrust between the parties. None of these debates ended with conclusions or agreements: It seems they rather motivated the parties to go even further in resorting to symbolic statements and less into the real issues at stake. For instance, at the 10th meeting Andrew Rieng Wieu (SANU) initiated such a debate, when suggesting that the TMC should condemn all acts of violence in the South, by the Anya-Nya as well as by government forces.³²⁶

Potentially a constructive suggestion, this nevertheless ended in an intense fight which ultimately resulted in resignation on the issue among the committee members. Lubari Ramba (Southern Front) defended Anya-Nya activities by stating that the insurgents were “nothing but a group of men who have resorted to arms when all other means have failed”. The Northerners followed up this by calling the Anya-Nya “terrorists”. The Northerners had already stated, for the first time in the 2nd TMC meeting, that the national army could not be condemned, as that would weaken the army and thus lead to an increase in the violence.³²⁷ This argument was repeated in this discussion in the 10th meeting, when Hasan al-Turabi (ICF), supported by other Northerners, stated that they could not condemn the army for resorting to force when the Anya-Nya

³²⁵ Ibid. No. 90. Appendix F. So. 1/30/272.

³²⁶ Ibid. No. 83. So. 1/28/265. Minutes of the 10th Meeting of the Twelve-Man Committee, 27 July, 1965.

³²⁷ Ibid. No. 76 So. 1/22/251. Minutes of the 2nd meeting of the Twelve Man Committee, 27 May, 1965.

deliberately continued to upset peace and order. The core of the matter was thus the disagreement on who was to blame for the intensified violence, and Dawood al-Khalifa (Umma Party) claimed that the reason for the increased violence was basically the weak links between the Southern politicians and the Anya-Nya.³²⁸ At the end of the 10th meeting it was suggested that the committee should admit they had failed to agree on security matters and that they from then on wanted to focus their efforts on an agreement on the administrative and constitutional set-up. Even this suggestion lapsed, though, as the SCP member voted against it.

The Principle of Self-Determination

As the TMC members seemed to be unable to agree on security measures, they decided to prioritize their efforts with their proposal for a Scheme for a constitutional and administrative set-up. This work was begun at the 12th meeting, when each party presented their Schemes of proposals.³²⁹ It was decided that each party would present a list with their proposals of which powers should be retained with the Central authorities and which powers should be transferred to Regional authorities. These lists were then to be discussed and merged into a common proposal for constitutional and administrative set-up, which would in turn, be presented to the reconvened Round-Table Conference. This was the same approach to these issues as had been taken at the RTC, only now the parties would attempt to agree on those powers that had previously ended with disagreement. When initiating this work, the Chair informed the Committee that the resolution of the undisclosed ‘Special Minute’ of the RTC would apply as part of the TMC terms of reference. Hence, he would dismiss Schemes that proposed Separation or the continuation of the status quo.³³⁰

³²⁸ Ibid. No. 83. So. 1/28/265. Minutes of the 10th meeting of the Twelve-Man Committee, 27 July, 1965.

³²⁹ Four Schemes of proposals were presented (by SANU, SF, NUP and ICF). The Umma Party member (Kamal el Din Abbas) declared, in the 13th meeting, that the Umma Party “in principle” supported both of the NUP and the ICF Schemes. Ibid. No. 86. So. 1/29/268. Minutes of the 13th meeting, 28 August, 1965. The Durham Special Archives’ Collection contains one additional Scheme of Proposals, which was seemingly presented to the TMC by the Liberal Party. I have found no other documentation of the Liberal Party’s role in the TMC, though, and therefore I have chosen not to include that proposal in this thesis. See The Liberal Party – Proposals for the Government of the Southern Region of the Sudan. [Plan submitted by the Liberal Party, 10 August 1965, signed: Stanisłw Apeysama.] Durham Special Collections’ Reference: G//S 1187 - Box 26/4b – 6. (South 1/44/308.)

³³⁰ For more information on the ‘Special Minute’, see Chapter 3 above.

This work initiated another TMC controversy. A discussion over whether the schemes proposed by the ICF and the Southern Front fell outside of those terms of reference, resulted in the dismissal of both schemes. The complaints were brought up by Hasan Turabi (ICF) and then also by Abel Alier (Southern Front), and were particularly discussed at the 13th, 14th and 15th TMC meetings, and finally decided at the 18th meeting.³³¹ Turabi objected that the Southern Front scheme suggested a separatist solution, while Alier claimed that the ICF scheme proposed an administrative set-up for the country which represented a continuation of the status quo. The TMC Chair gave his rulings concerning those proposals at the 14th and 15th meetings respectively. As for the Scheme of the Southern Front, the Chair ruled that since it suggested elections that opened for secession, it could not be considered by the TMC.³³² The ICF Scheme was also rejected by the Chair, who concluded that it not only preserved the status quo, but actually offered the Southern region less power than it held by the current system of government.³³³ As both schemes were deemed unsatisfactory, the two parties were requested to adjust their proposals into compliance with the RTC terms of reference. Hasan al-Turabi of the ICF responded to this request by declaring that they would support the NUP scheme. Abel Alier and the Southern Front wanted to rewrite their scheme, but failed to do so within the time-limit set by the Chair.

At the 18th TMC meeting, 30 September, 1965, this debate culminated in a heated discussion over the right to self-determination and the consequences of this principle for the Southern Sudanese people. The Northern representatives argued that even the second Southern Front scheme contained the possibility of separation: As it opened for elections on that issue, the Northerners demanded it should be rejected like the first one. Abel Alier and the Southern Front continued to insist on the right of the Southern Sudanese to make their own decision (through elections) on the final solution to the conflict. Umma Party representative, Mohamed Dawood al-Khalifa, argued that: "The Southern Sudanese are not a separate Sudanese nation and therefore

³³¹ R.O. Collins' Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections' Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 Minutes of the 13th, 14th, 15th and 18th meetings of the Twelve-Man Committee, 28 August, 1 September, 9 September and 30 September, 1965.

³³² Letter from Yousif Mohamed Ali, Chairman of the 12-Man Committee concerning Dr. Turabi's objections to the submission of the Southern Front. Durham Special Archives Collection's Reference: Box 26/4b - 9. (South 1/44/311.)

³³³ "Letter from Yousif Mohamed Ali, Chairman of the 12-Man Committee concerning the Southern Front's objection [sic] to the scheme submitted by the Islamic Charter Front." Durham Special Archives Collection's Reference: Box 26/4 - 11. (South 1/44/314.)

cannot justify self-determination.”³³⁴ The Southern Front representatives continue to claim that their main view was merely that the proposals agreed upon by the TMC should be presented to the Southern people for a vote, so that they would have the possibility to state their opinion regarding the final agreement. This idea was rejected by the entire TMC, and all the members claimed that this was an attempt to secretly claim the right of separation, which was publicly known to be the ultimate aim of the Southern Front. William Deng tried to convince Alier that the Southern Front should support the SANU scheme, so that they avoid further delays in their work. This request was turned down by Alier, who then alleged that this was an attempt to pressure the Southern Front to reject a principle that they were determined to defend. Nevertheless, after a long discussion concerning the Southern Front position on the question of self-determination (whether that principle came within or outside the TMC terms of reference), the Committee agreed to base their discussions of power-sharing on the schemes of NUP and SANU (inside).³³⁵

Distribution of Powers

The work that ultimately laid the foundation for the main part of the TMC report were the negotiations that attempted to find a constitutional and administrative system that would satisfy both Southerners and Northerners. This work began with the two schemes that were finally agreed to, although reluctantly, by the parties; the schemes that had been presented by NUP, which became the Northern scheme, and the scheme initially presented by SANU (inside), which became the Southern scheme in these negotiations. Later in this process the two negotiating parties amended their schemes and presented new ones, attempting to finalize an agreement on the relationship between Central and Regional authorities.³³⁶

The main content of the Northern scheme was decentralization of powers by the establishment of Regional governments in each province, which would have one

³³⁴ R.O. Collins' Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections' Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 No. 95. So. 1/31/275. Minutes of the 18th meeting of the Twelve-Man Committee, 30 September, 1965.

³³⁵ Ibid. No. 95. So. 1/31/275. Minutes of the 18th meeting of the Twelve-Man Committee, 30 September, 1965.

³³⁶ Ibid. Proposal by Northern Parties on Regional Government System. [Dated 30 March, 1966.] Durham Special Collections' Reference: G//S 1187 – Box 22/5b – N. (South 1/46/329.)

elected assembly as well as one executive assembly. Consequently, this split the South into three separate Regions, that each would be ruled by separate administrative and political organs. According to this scheme, the central authorities would maintain “the important powers, leaving to the regions powers as elementary education, public health, local commerce, utilization of agricultural land, animal wealth and forest development.”³³⁷

The Southern scheme, then, proposed a federal system of government, within which each Region would be administered by a Prime Minister, an executive council, a governor and a legislature, and that this political and bureaucratic system would have powers to control: “local government administration, police, prisons, public health, agriculture, pre-university education, public information, industrial development, cooperative societies, arms imports and control, export and import excise duties, roads and regional communications, courts, public services and other less important powers.”³³⁸

Moreover, the Southern scheme proposed that the three Southern provinces would be united as one Southern region, while the six Northern provinces would constitute one Region. The geographical division of the country into Regions was to become one of the most important differences that the two sides would prove unable to agree on. The Northerners insisted that the Regions in the entire country would be divided by the provincial borders, and thus the South should be ruled as three separate Regions: Equatoria, Bahr al-Ghazal and Upper Nile. To allow the South to be administered as one single Region, the Northerners argued, would only maintain the image among many of the division of the country in two opposing Regions, and encourage the conflict rather than conclude it. According to Abel Alier, this was an attempt to split the Southerners so that they would become more easily manipulated, as “balkanization of the South was the key to the survival and continuation of national

³³⁷ The National Unionist Party Proposal for the Settlement of the Problem of the South. [Proposals presented to the Twelve-Man Committee 18 August, 1965.] Durham Special Collections' Reference: G//S 1187 - Box 26/4b - 7. (South 1/44/306.)

³³⁸ Proposals by the Sudan African National Union (Sanu) to the Twelve-Man Committee on the Constitutional and Administrative Set-up in the Sudan. [Proposals presented to the Twelve-Man Committee 18 August, 1965.] Durham Special Collections' Reference: G//S 1187 - Box 26/4b - 4. (South 1/44/307.)

identity.”³³⁹ As a compromise solution, the Southerners suggested that the country be divided into four Regions: South (Bahr al-Ghazal, Equatoria and Upper Nile provinces), North (Khartoum and Northern provinces), West (Kordofan and Darfur provinces) and East (Blue Nile and Kassala Provinces).³⁴⁰ As stated in the TMC report, the parties never reached agreement on this issue.

At the 18th TMC meeting the negotiations attempting to merge the two schemes began, resulting in agreement on the powers that should be exclusive for the Central government.³⁴¹ At the 20th meeting, held on 13 October, 1965 Abel Alier said that the Southern Front endorsed those powers to remain Central if guarantees were given to make sure that they were exercised in accordance with the general interests of the country.³⁴² The system of administration of the Regional rule was also decided without any significant obstacles, except the issue of procedures for election of its Head Executive: The Northerners suggested that he should be appointed by Central authorities, after consultation with the Regional authorities. The Southerners demanded that the Regional Assembly should appoint him, regardless of the opinion of the Central government. As accounted for in the TMC Report, this issue remained unresolved.³⁴³

Another point that led to lengthy discussions was the issue of financial relationship between the Central and the Regional authorities. The Southerners wanted to secure the Regions’ freedoms to undertake economic investments unrestricted by the Central authorities. The Southern Front’s economist, Hilary Logali, stated that Regional authorities should be able to plan and implement economic investments in their own Region: “For instance, we want power to decide about the sugar scheme at Mongalla

³³⁹ Abel Alier 1990: 37.

³⁴⁰ Recommendations of the 12-Man Committee to the Chairman of the Round Table Conference in the South. June 1966.

³⁴¹ R.O. Collins’ Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections’ Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 No. 95. So. 1/31/275. Twelve Man Committee Minutes of the 18th meeting held on Thursday, 30 September, 1965. The final agreements are accounted for in the last section of this Chapter: “The Report of the Twelve-Man Committee”.

³⁴² Ibid. No. 96. So. 1/33/277. Twelve Man Committee Minutes of the 20th meeting held on Wednesday, 20 October, 1965.

³⁴³ See the final section of this Chapter, “The Report of the Twelve-Man Committee”.

rather than Geneid.”³⁴⁴ To achieve such financial independence, the Regional authorities should have the possibility to collect regional taxes, independent from Central interference. This was rejected by the Northerners, as they saw it as based on principles of federation, which they did not accept as suitable for the Sudan.³⁴⁵ The Northerners claimed that the Southern proposal on this issue would place the Central authorities at the mercy of the Regions, and thus argued that all tax revenues should come under the authority of the Central government before being redistributed to the Regions. As Abdullah al-Sayed (Professionals’ Front) put it: “the Center is the father of the regions.”³⁴⁶ During the same meeting, Turabi (ICF) came clear in his opinion that the authority of the Centre had to be absolute, although the Region would be secured from domination except in exceptional circumstances. Logali answered to this by reminding the TMC of the Southern Front stand that “whatever plan is approved should be submitted to the Southern people in a referendum.” SANU(inside) and Southern Front joined forces in their insistence that the Central government should not have the sole authority to legislate and enforce taxation –Regional authorities should be free to exercise such powers to ensure their development and autonomy.

The committee agreed that a financial expert should be called for this issue, to clarify to the TMC members the practical implications of different policies on this topic.³⁴⁷ The committee met with experts, without coming any closer to agreement. In the end, the only agreements that were made on this issue was the recommendation to appoint an expert committee to recommend a suitable financial arrangement under the system of government proposed by the TMC, and the appointing of a Central Development Commission, to ensure regional development.³⁴⁸

The constitutional relationship between the Central and Regional authorities was finally agreed to after lengthy debates. It was decided that Central authorities would be sovereign and only subject to the Constitution. Nevertheless, the relationship

³⁴⁴ Logali, as quoted in R.O. Collins’ Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections’ Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 No. 110. So. 1/39/293. Minutes of the 36th meeting, no date, 1966.

³⁴⁵ Ibid. No. 112. So. 1/39/295. Minutes of the 38th meeting held on 29 February, 1966.

³⁴⁶ Ibid. No. 115. So. 1/40/298. Minutes of the 41st meeting held on 9 March, 1966.

³⁴⁷ Ibid. No. 111. So. 1/39/294. Minutes of the 37th meeting held on 10 February, 1966.

³⁴⁸ Recommendations of the 12-Man Committee to the Chairman of the Round Table Conference in the South. June 1966.

between Central and Regional authorities would be implemented in the National Constitution, and thus amendments in this relationship would only be possible by gaining a two-thirds majority in parliament. This was meant to function as a Constitutional safeguard that would guarantee Regional authorities from unwarranted interference by the Central government.³⁴⁹ Moreover, at the 42nd meeting, held on 15 March, 1966, the Committee agreed that their proposed constitutional and administrative system should regulate the relationship between the Central government and all Regions –not only between North and South.³⁵⁰

Governmental Response to the Twelve-Man Committee

22 June, 1965, the Maghoub government took office in Khartoum. This government was to be remembered for its ruthless and uncompromising policies in the South, attitudes that were also reflected in its relationship with the TMC. At its second meeting the TMC members discussed security measures, and realised that there was a good deal of confusion concerning the realities on the ground in the South.³⁵¹ The Committee then asked the government for a report on the security situation. It would take time, though, before such a report was presented to the Committee.

Prime Minister Mahgoub delayed until the 9th TMC meeting, on 22 July, 1965, before he reported to the TMC on the security situation in the South and the measures taken by the government to improve that situation.³⁵² In his report the Prime Minister then said that the security situation in the South was unsatisfying, and that this was the main factor that had hindered implementation of RTC resolutions. He stated that the government wanted a peaceful solution to the civil war, and that such a solution had to be found within a united Sudan. Mahgoub also said that the government was focused on upholding security in the Southern region. In the following discussion, Mahgoub maintained that the violence in the South was mainly the responsibility of the Southern insurgents, and that violence towards civilians had increased since February. The immediate step that the government would make was therefore to grant

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ R.O. Collins' Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections' Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 No. 116. So. 1/41/299. Minutes of the 42nd meeting held on 15 March, 1966.

³⁵¹ Ibid. No. 76 So. 1/22/251. Minutes of the Second meeting held on Thursday, 27 May, 1965

³⁵² Ibid. No. 82. So. 1/28/263. Minutes of the 9th meeting held on 22 July, 1965.

general amnesty for a period of 15 days to rebels who wanted to surrender their arms. After this amnesty-period had expired, the government would turn to force to crush the mutiny. During this discussion Andrew W. Riang of SANU said that since the problem was a political one, a political solution was needed, and mere force would not solve the conflict. He said that as long as no political measures were agreed to, no insurgent would lay down his arms, out of fear that the peacemaking process would fail: “One cannot ask one to lay down his arms before peace terms are negotiated.”³⁵³ To this, the Prime Minister responded: “Does this mean you do not agree on laying down arms?” He then put forward a big amount of documents that he claimed were proof that Southern politicians such as William Deng had encouraged the insurgents to keep on to their arms for at least 5 more years: “hold on to your arms for the next five years beginning from now. We have proved to the Arabs we are strong politically and are not afraid to defend our land when necessary. The Arabs have learned a lesson and it is most unlikely they will resort to army rule again”.³⁵⁴ This discussion ended with this, as no Southerner rejected the accusations of the Prime Minister.

When faced with criticism towards the government’s use of force in the South, Mahgoub answered that “my government’s policy is to maintain security and disarm lawbreakers. If the mutineers insist on not laying down arms my government will not fold their arms and stand aside”. This coincides with the policies led by the Mahgoub government throughout its period, which was more insistent on attempts to crush the Anya-Nya by force, than ending the war by implementing political and administrative measures.

In his statement Mahgoub also reminded the committee of their terms of reference, and said that when the TMC had agreed on a constitutional and administrative set-up for the country, his government would arrange a reconvened Round-Table Conference, in November at the latest. This was not followed up by the Prime Minister, though. A second RTC was never convened, and the cooperation between the TMC and the government was to become gradually more difficult throughout the winter of 1965/66.

³⁵³ Ibid. No. 82. So. 1/28/263. Minutes of the 9th meeting held on 22 July, 1965.

³⁵⁴ This quote was taken from a note supposedly written by William Deng (SANU) to Anya-Nya fighters after the Round-Table Conference. Ibid. No. 82. So. 1/28/263. Minutes of the 9th meeting held on 22 July, 1965.

The Southerners inside the TMC repeatedly brought up the issue of the reconvening of the RTC. For instance, at the 23rd TMC meeting, Abel Alier complained that their work was dragging on without sufficient progress, and that the Prime Minister should be reminded of his responsibility to reconvene the RTC.³⁵⁵ This led to a big argument whether the TMC should ask the government to set a date for the RTC2, a suggestion that Hasan al-Turabi (ICF) opposed. The Chair seemed to agree with Turabi, and stated that the major task of finding an appropriate administrative and constitutional system should be finished before the government reconvened the RTC. Nonetheless, the Southern members insisted on asking the Prime Minister to set a date for the conference, and it was agreed to ask Mahgoub to find a date in mid-December or early January, 1966. This did not happen, though, and Mahgoub, when meeting the TMC on 15 January, for the first time indicated that he might not reconvene a second RTC after receiving the TMC report, when stating: “[...] the members of this Committee represent the different views in the country. If you can come to an agreement that is acceptable to all the parties we might not need to call a Conference.”³⁵⁶

Mahgoub met with the Committee again in November, and then again in January, consistently arguing that implementation of measures agreed to by the RTC and TMC depended on the security situation, which was still unsatisfactory. When asked, at the 33rd TMC meeting, 15 January, 1966 for a time-span as for when peace could be achieved, the Prime Minister answered: “this depends on the good will of the Southerners. It can be achieved in three months time.”³⁵⁷ This answer did not assure the Southerners about the intentions of the government, and surely strengthened their suspicion towards the willingness of their Northern counterpart to finding a peaceful solution.

The TMC delegates repeatedly discussed how the Prime Minister seemed uninterested in meeting them, and how he made statements to the press denouncing the committee

³⁵⁵ Ibid. No. 99. So. 1/34/280. Minutes of the 23rd meeting held on Saturday 20 November, 1965.

³⁵⁶ As quoted in Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 222.

³⁵⁷ R.O. Collins' Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections' Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 No. 108. So. 1/38/290. Minutes of the 33rd meeting held on 15 January, 1966.

and its lack of progress.³⁵⁸ At several meetings suggestions that the TMC should dissolve because of governmental disinterest and public criticism against the committee came up. It was a dominant opinion among the TMC members that if the government had no intentions to reconvene the RTC, there was no need for them to continue their work.³⁵⁹ 2 March, 1966 the Prime Minister was quoted in the newspaper *Al-Rai Al-A'am* saying: “The committee has failed in its task and [...] it is revolving on a vicious circle.”³⁶⁰ This was taken up by Abdel Latif al-Khalifa, who suggested that the committee should resign in protest. Al-Khalifa’s suggestion was resisted, though, and met with suspicion by Lubari Ramba: “Resignation, of course, may be what some people are aiming at unless everyone is in favor of lodging a protest to the Prime Minister.”³⁶¹ It was suggested that they should publicly protest against the Prime Minister’s statement, to prove to the public that he was wrong, when Hilary Logali stated that the Prime Minister might actually be right: “we have not carried out our duty as we should; we have not reached an agreement. On the contrary we might be in the same position as when we began.”³⁶²

As for making the gap between the TMC and the government complete, Prime Minister Mahgoub in April, 1966 gave a public statement saying that the government had its own plan to end the war, and that it would not consider the TMC proposals binding. This made the TMC members furious, and threatened to overthrow the entire committee.³⁶³ In June, 1966, the Prime Minister presented a constitutional and administrative plan that had been worked out by the government, in an interview printed in the weekly newspaper *Al-Rai Al-A'am*.³⁶⁴ This plan was totally uncoordinated with the work that the TMC had been doing in this respect, and fuelled the conflict between the government and the TMC. According to this interview, the main content of Mahgoub’s plan was that the central government would maintain

³⁵⁸ Ibid. See for instance, No. 107. So. 1/37/288. Minutes of the 31st meeting held on 3 January, 1966, and No. 114. So. 1/40/297. Minutes of the 40th meeting held on 6 March, 1966.

³⁵⁹ This was explicitly discussed at several meetings, for instance the 30th, 31st, and the 40th. Ibid.

³⁶⁰ As quoted in Ibid. No. 114. So. 1/40/297. Minutes of the 40th meeting held on 6 March, 1966.

³⁶¹ As quoted in Ibid. No. 114. So. 1/40/297. Minutes of the 40th meeting held on 6 March, 1966.

³⁶² As quoted in Ibid. No. 114. So. 1/40/297. Minutes of the 40th meeting held on 6 March, 1966.

³⁶³ R.O. Collins’ Notes from the recorded Minutes of the Twelve-Man Committee. Durham Special Archives Collections’ Reference: 22/6a - Boxes 5-8 No. 119. So. 1/42/302. Minutes of the 45th meeting held on 27 April, 1966.

³⁶⁴ *Al-Rai Al-A'am* weekly, 10 June 1966, as referred to in Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 201. According to Salih’s reference, this interview was printed in *Al-Rai Al-A'am* 10 June, 1960, although this must obviously be a typing error, and as seen from the context I assume the correct date must be 10 June 1966.

powers over foreign affairs, defence, planning and economy, and higher education. Nonetheless, a Regional government would be established in each province, that would be given the power to run local affairs like elementary and intermediate education, roads, security and unspecialized hospitals. The details of this plan was never revealed to the public, and neither did this government implement it, as Sadiq al-Mahdi managed to outvote Mahgoub and establish a new Umma-led government by 25 July.

The Report of the Twelve-Man Committee

The TMC report that was submitted to Prime Minister Mahgoub 26 June, 1966 contained a summary of the work of the Committee, and the agreements and disagreements that resulted from it. Concerning the discussions on the role of the TMC and its responsibility for the security situation in the South, the report accounted for the differences that remained unresolved: The Northerners in the Committee adopted the position that the establishment of law and order was a pre-requisite for the implementation of the RTC resolutions. The Southerners, on the other hand, were of the opinion that only through the implementation of those resolutions could law and order be established.

Similarly, the report recapitulated the differences among the TMC members on the condemnation of violence. It declared that the Committee was unanimous in condemnation of violence, although they differed on who were the perpetrators of such actions, and thus who to condemn. The Northerners, it is recalled, argued that the “terrorist organisation, the Anya Nya, should be condemned.”³⁶⁵ The Southerners argued that not only should the Anya-Nya be condemned, rather also the government’s army. The report stated that disagreement remained in this issue, in spite of lengthy and detailed discussions. Nevertheless, it was agreement on who were responsible for establishing law and order in the South, and that responsibility lay not upon the TMC. Rather, one of the most distinct remarks of the report was its denunciation of the government’s effort to achieve an end to the violence: “Unless the

³⁶⁵ Recommendations of the 12-Man Committee to the Chairman of the Round Table Conference in the South. June 1966. All quotes in this section are taken from this report, unless other reference is given.

Government adopted an attitude of utmost cooperation it was unlikely that any efforts by the Committee in this respect could bear fruit. And the circumstances were not the most favourable for such an attitude.” As shown in this Chapter, the Maghoub government offered the TMC no help in its efforts, but rather counteracted it, by aggressive policies in the South as well as through statements in the media about the failure of the Committee. Even before the TMC had concluded its work, Mahgoub stated that the Committee was “responsible for the failure of not reaching a peaceful solution for the Southern Problem”.³⁶⁶

As the responsibility for the security situation lay on the government, and the TMC could not agree on recommendations on this issue, the Committee decided to shift the focus of its efforts onto “its first and main term of reference”: The Constitutional and Administrative set-up for the country. The starting point of these discussions was the decision made in the ‘Special Session’ of the Round-Table Conference, 29 March 1965: That ‘the two extremes’ –separation and the status quo –were unacceptable solutions for the Sudan and were thus outside the TMC terms of reference. The Report recapitulated that four Schemes of proposals were submitted to the Committee, on behalf of SANU, ICF, the Southern Front and NUP, as the Umma Party decided to adopt the principles of their partner in government, NUP. When complaints were proposed towards the Schemes of the Southern Front and ICF, the Chairman decided that both Schemes were outside the terms of reference, and thus set them aside. Consequently, ICF adopted the NUP Scheme and the Southern Front adopted the Scheme proposed by SANU.

Distribution of Powers

Throughout these discussions it became clear that this work should be separated into two tasks: Firstly, the distribution of powers to the Central and Regional authorities, and secondly, the relationship between the two. It was agreed to split powers in three categories: Central, Concurrent and Regional powers. The Committee agreed on a list of eight specific powers to be exercised by Central authorities: National defence,

³⁶⁶ Prime Minister Mahgoub in *Al-Rai Al-A'am*, 2 March, 1966, as quoted in Mohamed Ali Mohamed Salih 1971 (MA thesis, University of Khartoum): 200.

external affairs, currency, communications and tele-communications, foreign trade, nationality, customs, and inter-regional trade.

Concurrent Powers

Further, it was agreed on a list of three main areas of powers that should be concurrent between the Central and the Regional authorities: Security forces, education, and public health. It was agreed that national legislature should enact the organisation of security forces, including recruitment and use of both national and local police forces. The Head National Executive should maintain ultimate powers over all security forces, and be allowed, “in certain circumstances”, to place any such force under his direct command. An additional remark was given, stating that Regional authorities should have the powers of recruitment and use of local police forces, subject to the legislation given by Central authorities. The Southern Front noted specifically that their view maintained to be that Regional authorities should be allowed to organise and run Home Guards to assist the security forces. This was rejected by the Northern parties.

Educational policy was to be subject to Central authorities, which would legislate and organise “Syllabuses, National Planning of Education, Definition of Standards and Qualifications.” The TMC also agreed that the powers to administrate all education lower than secondary stage should be transferred to Regional authorities, that secondary education should be a concurrent responsibility while power of higher education should be maintained by Central authorities. The Southern Front explicitly stated that some Regional distinctive characters in particular reflected on education, and that the Region should be given the opportunity to adjust educational policies to such characteristics. This was rejected by the Northern parties.

Powers to legislate and administrate public health was also agreed to be divided between the Central and Regional authorities. The powers to lay out general policies and plans for the health sector were to be maintained by the Central government. Similarly, the Centre should continue to have the main responsibility for medical education and training, registration of all health personnel as well as control and supervision of assisted medical projects, national policy for nutrition, control of drugs

and poisons, medical research and control of epidemics, registration of births and deaths and licensing and supervision of hospitals throughout the country. Regional authorities were admitted the powers to establish and run hospitals concurrently with the Central authorities, although subject to legislation, licensing and supervision by the latter. Moreover, the Region was admitted the powers to control endemic diseases, environmental health services, school health services, health education, maternity and child-welfare services, supervision of markets, training of village midwives and training of medical assistants and opening of dispensaries.

In the field labelled 'Antiquities' it was decided that both Central and Regional authorities should be allowed to carry out excavations. Similarly, the field of Labour was to be concurrent: Policy was to be laid down by the Centre, while Regional authorities should execute labour policies as legislated by the Centre.

Regional Powers

The powers that the TMC agreed to transfer to Regional authorities were listed as follows: Regional and local government administration, Regional public information, promotion of tourism, museums and zoos, exhibitions, establishment of local roads and maintenance of main roads, town and village planning, protection of forests, crops and pastures (although subject to national legislation), protection and development of animal resources (also subject to national legislation), land utilization and agricultural development in accordance with the national plan for development, study and development of languages and local culture and, finally, commerce and industry. The Southern Front maintained their stand that Regional authorities should be allowed to establish cultural relations with other countries on their own initiative, without interference by the Central authorities. This was rejected by the Northern parties.

The Regional government was to be divided in legislative and executive assemblies. The members of the legislative body were to be chosen through direct elections, and they were to enact Regional law and supervise and set down policy for the local executive assembly. It was agreed that members of the executive assembly were to be elected, by the members of the legislative assembly, who also held the power to

dismiss them. Regarding the process of selecting the Head Executive, the differences between Southerners and Northerners were recapitulated in the report, as this issue was never agreed upon. The Southerners argued that the Regional Assembly should select two candidates for the Central government to choose one. The Northerners wanted the Central government to appoint the Head Executive “after consultations with the Region.”

When according for their view on the relationship between the Regional and Central authorities, the TMC report emphasized that the main consideration in this question had been how to “protect the vital interests of the Nation”, while at the same time safeguarding the Regional government from unnecessary interference by the Centre. This dilemma was solved by proposing that the power-sharing accounted for above would be implemented in the national constitution, which could not be amended without a Parliamentary majority of two-thirds. Thus, although the Regional powers would be subject to Central sovereignty, the fact that the Central government would be subject to the constitution, would secure the Region against any unfounded interference. Additionally, it was to be stated in the constitution that any judicial changes that interfered with Regional powers be done only after consultation with those Regional authorities concerned. The Southern Front accepted this model only if their proposed geographical division was adopted.

A clause on an eventual emergency situation admitted the Centre the possibility to suspend Regional powers or dissolve the Regional Assembly. For the latter, a condition was added that elections were to be held within one month of the Emergency. Any emergency had to be acknowledged by Parliament within two weeks.

Other Unresolved Issues

The financial arrangements between the Central and Regional authorities were not agreed upon, so the Committee recommended that an expert committee be appointed “to study and recommend the financial arrangements which shall be adopted under our proposed system of government.” Additionally, it was recommended to assign a Central Development Commission, which should contain proportional Regional representation.

The disagreement on Regional geography, with extensive details of the arguments of each delegation, was recorded in the report. The main disagreement of this issue was the size of the Southern region, as the Southern members insisted that it remained one Region, while the Northerners wanted to split it in three, according to the existing provincial borders. Disagreement remained on this issue.

In an introductory letter attached to the TMC Report, which was directed to the Prime Minister and signed by the Chairman of the TMC, the Committee asked for the reconvening of the Round-Table Conference (RTC).³⁶⁷ Neither Maghoub nor his successor Sadiq al-Mahdi reconvened the RTC. Instead, Sadiq al-Mahdi appointed two new Commissions that were to follow up the RTC/TMC resolutions and work out solutions on those issues that remained unresolved: The Political Parties Conference (October 1966) and the National Constitution Commission (February 1967-January 1968).

³⁶⁷ Introductory letter, attached to the Recommendations of the 12-Man Committee to the Chairman of the Round Table Conference in the South. June 1966.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

It has been claimed that the parliamentary period of the 1960s (June 1965-May 1969) was the worst period of the first civil war.³⁶⁸ Presumably this resulted from a variety of factors: The excessive use of military force by the government, the increasing recruitment and arms access experienced by the Anya-Nya, the lack of legitimacy of the Southern politicians and the lack of information accessed by the civilian population in the North, who probably supported the military offensive without realising its devastating effects. Paradoxically, there was an ongoing peacemaking process in the country throughout these developments. This chapter will analyse the actors and events described in chapters 2, 3 and 4 in light of the theories accounted for in Chapter 1, with particular emphasis on Barbara Walter's 'Credible Commitment Theory' and Stuart Kaufman's theory of the 'Symbolic Politics Trap'. This will clarify the events accounted for in the previous chapters with regard to answering the main research question put forward by this thesis: Why did the peacemaking effort of the Round-Table Conference (RTC) and the Twelve-Man Committee (TMC) fail to deliver peace in Southern Sudan?

The Initiating phase

It is commonly accepted that the most critical initial condition for a peacemaking effort to succeed is finding the ripe time for negotiation, which presupposes that both sides are sufficiently motivated for peacemaking.³⁶⁹ According to Walter, the two factors that often motivate combatants to end the war and work towards peace, and as such affect the ripeness of the situation, are the costs of war and a military stalemate.

Much can be said about these factors in the Sudanese context of the 1960s. As for the costs of war, they are normally measured by the duration of the war and the number of war-related deaths. In 1965 the combatants probably did not consider any of these factors to have reached unbearable levels. As discussed in this thesis, the warfare was still not intense enough to be accurately labelled a civil war, as the Anya-Nya factions were fragmented and inefficient and still suffered from a crippling shortage of arms.

³⁶⁸ Elias Nyamlell Wakoson in Mohamed Omer Beshir (ed.) 1984: 180.

³⁶⁹ Barbara Walter 2002: 8. See also Chapter 1 above.

The numbers of casualties of this war are difficult to determine, especially for the period of 1955-1965. In fact, no reliable estimate has yet been proposed for this period. It is unlikely, though, considering the intensity of the warfare, that by 1965 the war-related deaths were high enough to motivate the combatants to commit themselves to a compromise. Similarly, a military stalemate was not yet reached, as the Anya-Nya experienced an increase in both their recruitment and arms supply during this period, and thus were encouraged in their belief that they could win the conflict militarily.

As accounted for in Chapter 1, the effectiveness of democratic institutions is an additional factor that has been perceived as significant for combatants to enter negotiations, although Walter from her quantitative tests concludes that this cannot be legitimately claimed as a general rule.³⁷⁰ In this particular case, the regimes change that followed the overthrow of the military regime of 'Abboud in 1964 was essential to the mere possibility of a peace process. 'Abboud consistently addressed the Southern rebellion as a security issue, and violently pursued Islamization and Arabization in the South in an attempt to end the conflict by a military victory. These policies became decisive for the popular discontent that eventually ended in 'Abboud's overthrow. Because of this, the parliamentary regime that followed could not ignore the violent uprising that took place in the Southern provinces of the country. Prime Minister Khalifa's government was the first independent Sudanese government to admit that there existed a problem in the Southern region, and the idea of the peacemaking effort of 1965-1966 was born from this realisation. Nonetheless, it would be too hasty to conclude that this resulted from the democratic nature of the new regime: After all, the RTC/TMC process failed, and the conflict developed from being a fragmented uprising in 1964 into an outright civil war by 1969.³⁷¹ Thus, the conflict was still there, and even more pressing, when the military again changed the political map in the Sudan and rid itself of the parliamentary system of government in 1969. This regime, led by Ja'far Nimeiri, in spite of being highly undemocratic, entered negotiations which actually materialised in implementation and peace. Thus,

³⁷⁰ Barbara Walter 2002: 74-75.

³⁷¹ See Chapter 2 above. See also Douglas H. Johnson in Christopher Clapham (ed.) 1998: 54, and H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 4.

the Sudanese case supports Walter's conclusion that democracy is not necessarily suggestive of successful peacemaking.

Although Walter and Kaufman mainly focus on the implementing phase in their theories of civil war resolution, both agree that finding the right time is crucial to the prospects for success of any peacemaking effort. A peace process should arise from a certain political mood, though: "Once the balance of power favors those who want peace, the time is right for a ceasefire", Kaufman claims.³⁷² It seems safe to conclude that this was not the case in the Sudan in 1965: SANU (outside) were practically forced to enter the negotiations, to prevent William Deng from 'hi-jacking' the party and leave the separatists in the movement totally powerless in exile.³⁷³ The Southern Front was also hesitant to endorse the RTC initiative, as the party decided to attend the conference as late as 6 March, 1965 –only nine days before the conference began. Even the sincerity of SANU (inside) may be subject to doubts. William Deng and his supporters must have known that they held few powers to actually enforce implementation of an eventual agreement, and thus, they were probably motivated, at least partly, by this chance to assume power over SANU while simultaneously gaining representation and possibly influence on political power in Khartoum.

The Southern political parties had no sufficient powers over the Anya-Nya to enforce any cease-fire during the negotiations, and it seems legitimate to ask: How were they then supposed to enforce implementation of the final agreement? The fragmentation of the Southern political movement, coupled with their insufficient power to control the rebels in the Southern bush, also had the effect of weakening their negotiating ability and revealing to their counterpart, the Northerners, that they probably were unable to enforce implementation of any signed agreement. Consequently, as the Northerners became aware of one of the severe weaknesses of the Southern movement, they exploited this for what it was worth, for instance by demanding that Southern unionists be represented at the RTC.³⁷⁴ As this thesis has argued, that move was probably an attempt to confuse public opinion about the legitimacy of SANU and

³⁷² Stuart J. Kaufman 2006: 207.

³⁷³ Although Deng ultimately managed to gain sole control of SANU: By August 1965 SANU (outside) had disintegrated due to personal and tribal rivalries. See Chapter 2 above.

³⁷⁴ See Chapter 3 above.

the Southern Front, in order to weaken the Southerners even further, as the support of those unionist Southerners was negligible.

In consequence, Southern fragmentation was clearly an obstacle to the RTC. Their internal rivalries and disagreements even surfaced inside the conference room: For instance, Aggrey Jaden, leader of the SANU (outside)-delegation, left the RTC after holding a hostile introductory speech, thus ignoring the need for a unified Southern negotiating strategy. By this act, he clearly signalled that he had no trust that the negotiations would be successful. SANU (inside) and Southern Front were equally doubtful, though somewhat more willing to make an effort, in spite of Alier's statement in retrospect, suggesting that nobody believed that any of the recommendations resulting from the RTC were likely to be implemented.³⁷⁵

Arguably, the Northerners were equally unengaged and uncommitted, focusing at the RTC mainly on positioning themselves for the April elections. Possibly out of fear for losing voters, they rejected any responsibility for the current violence, and presented only one suggestion for a solution, signalling that they had nothing to give. The TMC suffered from a similar lack of Northern commitment: The parties represented in government were also represented in the TMC, but the government still showed no interest in implementing resolutions during the TMC negotiations -despite the fact that all agreements were made unanimously in that committee.

The Negotiating phase

Although it is commonly accepted that finding the ripe time for negotiations is a crucial factor in conflict resolution, many researchers argue that the most critical phase in a peacemaking process is the negotiating phase.³⁷⁶ These authors argue that a key to successful peacemaking is that the negotiations solve the root causes of the conflict. Identity issues, divisibility of the stakes and the presence and role of mediators are three key factors that work to complicate this phase.

³⁷⁵ Abel Alier 1990: 32.

³⁷⁶ See Chapter 1 above.

As accounted for in Chapter 1, the emotional character of identity-issues adds a layer of complexity to a civil war, which makes it much more difficult to conclude.³⁷⁷ Such questions were, and still are, highly relevant to the Sudanese conflict. Both Southern and Northern Sudanese in the 1960s were aware of and sensitive to the cultural and religious differences between their regions. The Southerners put a lot of weight on this problem, and argued that it had contributed to the smouldering conflict ever since the first contact between African and Arabised Sudanese.³⁷⁸ Especially the most extreme Southerners, SANU (outside) and the Southern Front, emphasized this aspect of the conflict. They claimed that the Arab disrespect for the Southern Sudanese people and their cultures and religions was an inherent root of the conflict, and concluded on the basis of this that the conflict could not be solved without allowing the South to separate. SANU (inside), representing the more moderate Southern view, supported the claim proposed by the Southern separatists that the conflict had roots in the ethnic and cultural differences between the South and the North, but were nevertheless convinced that a federation that implied the transferring of significant powers to the South might provide sufficient assurance to the South to convince the Southern rebels to put down their arms.

The Northerners, on the contrary, denied that the conflict was based on any racial or ethnic factors. They claimed that the national unity and amicable atmosphere between different ethnic groups in the North essentially proved that Arabism was no racial concept. Indeed, at the RTC even the modest Prime Minister Khalifa went so far as to completely deny the presence of ethnic conflicts among the Sudanese people.³⁷⁹ Nonetheless, at the National Committee for the Constitution in 1967-68, the Northern parties were all concerned with the question of the Sudanese identity as an Islamic one, and insisted upon the Arab-Islamic nature of the state. This indicates that the stand they officially took at the RTC and the TMC may have been an attempt to prove to the outside world that they had no intentions to treat non-Muslim and non-Arab Sudanese unfairly, rather than an attempt to prove it to the Southerners.

³⁷⁷ See Chapter 1 above.

³⁷⁸ See Chapters 2 and 3 above.

³⁷⁹ Speeches of the Delegates and Foreign Observers: Prime Minister, SIRR El Khatim El Khalifa ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

Considering this in light of Kaufman's theory of the 'Symbolic politics trap', it becomes clear that the Sudanese civil war fits well into his definition of an ethnic civil war, in his words: "[...] a war where the key issues at stake –that is, the express reason political power is being contested –involve ethnic markers such as language or religion or the status of ethnic groups themselves."³⁸⁰ One of the core arguments that Kaufman makes is that civil wars are essentially wars between conflicting societies, and not merely their leaders, and that ethnic civil wars are particularly linked to hostile mass feelings that work as driving forces of such wars. Thus, to be able to conclude ethnic civil wars, those enemy images that work to legitimize the warfare must be counteracted, and one crucial factor in this process is to encourage the political and military leaders and the populations of the conflicting societies to alter both their understandings of their own identity as well as that of their adversary. This is critical for the process of forgiveness and reconciliation, Kaufman claims, as the ultimate aim of civil war resolution is to enable conflicting societies to build new and positive relationships within which they can live at peace rather than war.

Studying the speeches, discussions and attitudes that were expressed at the RTC and TMC, it becomes clear that the Sudanese politicians failed to deliver such a vision for their societies. Neither the strategy of the separatist Southerners nor that of the Northerners contributed to the process of enabling Southerners and Northerners to replace their hostility with understanding of their counterpart. Both built upon victimization inside their own constituencies; the separatist Southerners by continuously repeating their message of the exploiting and hostile Arab-Islamic Sudanese whose main aim was to subjugate and ultimately assimilate the Southern languages, cultures and religions, and the Northerners by refusing to admit any responsibility for the present conflict, while claiming that any Southern demand for self-determination or federation were essentially attempts to divide the country. This, linked with the lack of factual information provided to the civilian population about the conflict probably worked to increase the gulf between the Southern and the Northern societies, and even to legitimise the war in both societies.³⁸¹

³⁸⁰ Stuart J. Kaufman 2001: 17.

³⁸¹ Both the Southern and the Northern criticism towards the RTC indicate that this peace initiative suffered from a lack of support among the Sudanese population. See "Arab Criticism on the Round-Table Conference" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents) and "Southern Criticism on the Round-Table Conference" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

The divisibility of the stakes in this conflict is a factor that is intimately linked to the former issue: As the perceptions of the root causes of the conflict differed greatly, the conception of the contested stakes themselves were sources of conflict. The Southerners claimed that the stakes were in fact indivisible, as they contested the mere foundation of the Sudanese state itself. They claimed that the Sudan was in fact two nations and that thus the Southerners should be allowed to separate and form their own state. The consequence of this would logically be that no powers were divided; all powers over the Southern society and state would be transferred to the Southern political and military leadership. SANU (inside) on the other hand argued that drastic changes in distribution of powers were needed, but that this was possible to organize within a united Sudan. This was also the outspoken view of the Northern delegates to the RTC and TMC, and as this thesis has showed, such an agreement of division of powers was indeed signed in the end. Had SANU (outside) been allowed to participate in the TMC, though, the situation might have been different, considering their uncompromising stance at the RTC. Nonetheless, the TMC did succeed in convincing the Southern Front to compromise, and bearing that in mind it is possible that SANU (outside) would adopt the same attitude, had they been given a chance of representation in the TMC.

Barbara Walter's study found that third-party security guarantees is one of the two key factors to achieve a lasting peace agreement. The second is power-sharing pacts.³⁸² In the end, the TMC went a long way in agreeing to the latter, which is essentially substantiated by the fact that a range of the agreements of the TMC report were successfully implemented as part of the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972. According to Walter, this is not unusual: Combatants in civil conflicts often come to mutual agreements designed to solve the root causes of their conflicts. The real obstacle occurs when these agreements are to be implemented, she claims: "Negotiations fail because combatants cannot credibly promise to abide by terms that create numerous opportunities for exploitation after the treaty is signed and implementation begins."³⁸³ Such security guarantees were absent at the RTC and the TMC, and given the level of distrust that remained between the parties throughout the

³⁸² See Chapter 1 above.

³⁸³ Barbara Walter 2002: 5.

process, it is unsurprising that the implementation of its agreements was unsuccessful. A necessary precondition that might, in Walter's opinion, weigh up for this obstacle, is involving a strong third party to the negotiations. This element was neglected by the parties at the RTC and TMC.

In fact, the absence of third-party intermediaries was a deliberate choice made by the the RTC and TMC participants. Especially the Northerners (who indeed constituted the stronger of the two parties) insisted on maintaining the national character of the conflict, and resolutely resisted to involve international bodies or actors. This is seen, for instance, in their refusal to submitting the RTC recommendations to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), and in their rejection of the Ghanaian offer to mediate in August 1965.³⁸⁴ The role of the observers at the RTC was clearly a weak one, although they at some occasions encouraged the parties to suppress their hostile attitudes and attempt to find solutions based on increased development and special safeguards for the South. They actively pushed for unity, probably because of fears that ideas of separation would spread into their own countries and lead to regional disintegration. This bias probably made the Southern separatists suspicious towards the role of the negotiators, and maybe even to the seriousness of the negotiations themselves. Thus, rather than playing a role in committing the parties to the process and ensuring safeguards for the implementation phase, the presence of the observers and the role they undertook by openly supporting the main claim of the Northerners probably reinforced Southern distrust. Moreover, while it increased the suspicion among the most ardent Southern separatists, it probably also strengthened the most uncompromising Northerners in their quest for a centralised system of government.

A case that can exemplify this is the agreement that was made at the 'Special Minute' on the final day of the RTC. According to this agreement, all parties agreed that both separatism and continuation of the status quo were unacceptable solutions to the conflict. Nonetheless, by the time of the TMC, both the separatist Southern Front and the Islamist ICF neglected that agreement, and presented proposals that opened for those outcomes. This shows how the participants even during the negotiation process itself, neglected vital agreements that were necessary for the continuation of their

³⁸⁴ See Chapters 1 and 3 above.

deliberations. Both the Southern Front and the ICF were aware of the agreement made at the RTC 'Special Minute', and thus both must have known that their proposals to the TMC would be contested and that in effect they would slow down the progress of their work. This might be seen as an expression of insincerity and distrust on their part. According to Walter, such attitudes should be dealt with through a mediator who is strong enough to push the parties in a constructive direction. Although the Chairman of the TMC was responsible for making decisions to solve such situations, and indeed took action to mediate when progress was slow, he held no means of sanctioning actors that counteracted the progress, and likewise he acquired no means of providing positive incentives for the parties, should they succeed.

As seen in Chapter 2, it was William Deng who first suggested inviting observers from neighbouring African countries to the RTC.³⁸⁵ This may seem as quite a paradox, considering that the governments of Sudan's neighbouring countries were likely to support the Northerners in such a conference, especially on their insistence on unity: Most of them were, after all, plagued with similar problems as the Sudanese, and were unlikely to support separatist forces that might disturb the power balance and newly drawn borders of the region. On the other hand, from the perspective of William Deng, it might have been pure self-interest that made him come up with such a suggestion. Considering the personal and political power struggles within the SANU, strong forces arguing against the separatist aims of Deng's opponents inside that party might well tip the balance in his favour, and strengthen his position in the game of Sudanese politics. Thus, the fact that the observers actively took side against the Southern separatists, probably fit the aims of William Deng, although it also served the purpose of the Northerners. As it split the already fragmented Southern movement even further, it probably also had consequences for the prevailing mistrust between the Southern separatists and the Northerners, by convincing the former of the lack of seriousness of their counterpart and strengthening their already strongly felt identity as a suppressed people surrounded by enemies.

Hence, it is obvious that the mistrust between the parties remained throughout this peacemaking process, and according to Walter's theory of 'Credible Commitment',

³⁸⁵ See Chapter 2 above.

this might have been avoided had a strong third party been involved. A comparison with the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972 may actually validate this claim.³⁸⁶ An important and immediate task for a mediator would be to gain the trust of both parties to the conflict; only then could the parties begin to trust the process, which is needed for them to ultimately gain confidence in each other. As Donald Rothchild argues in his study of the Addis Ababa Agreement, the mediators made a range of efforts aiming to achieve the trust of the combatants prior to those negotiations, and these efforts proved essential to the outcome.³⁸⁷ In the negotiations for the Addis Ababa Agreement both state and nonstate actors contributed substantially, and the combination of these, according to Rothchild, had a positive effect on the peacemaking process. The nonstate actors were the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), and both were crucial in affording an informal mediating body that were in no position to threaten or coerce any of the combatants. This, coupled with their intimate knowledge of the conflict, enabled those organisations to achieve the needed trust by both parties and thus became crucial to the first step of convincing the government to participate in the peacemaking process.

Nonetheless, Rothchild points to significant weaknesses that limited the possibility of the nonstate mediators to contribute to the negotiations: “Even though they were able to enhance communication, help to build a consensus, draft possible agreements, facilitate reciprocal concessions, and draw the actor’s attention to issues on which agreement existed, they were unable to guarantee any agreements reached, and they were in no position to enforce them.”³⁸⁸ The state actor that pushed those negotiations forward when dead-locked was Ethiopia –one of Sudan’s neighbouring countries that were not invited to join the RTC as part of the delegation of observers. Like the observer countries to the RTC the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie also feared secessionist groups inside his country, though he solved this differently than the former: He insisted that he remain a supporter of the negotiation efforts, though not officially labelled a mediator. He nonetheless mediated directly when the parties got trapped in a dead-lock. By this strategy, he solved an impasse on the question of the

³⁸⁶ A broader comparison between the RTC/TMC and the Addis Ababa Agreement would have contributed to this study, but such a comparison would unfortunately exceed the limits of a MA.

³⁸⁷ Donald Rothchild 1997: 230.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*: 231.

future of the Sudanese army, as Selassie met separately with the two delegations and proposed a compromise solution in which he played a role as guarantor of the safety of Southern rebels returning to the Sudan as part of the agreement. Thus, this combination of informal NGOs and a strong and trusted state actor made a significantly beneficial contribution to the negotiations leading to the Addis Ababa Agreement, which in the end implemented a peace agreement quite similar to the TMC recommendations. This indicates that the absence of such mediators possibly weakened the negotiation process of 1965-66.

The Implementing phase

One significant factor that complicates this issue is the political and military contexts of these two otherwise comparable negotiation processes. Both parties to the negotiations were radically different in 1965-66 and in 1972. In the RTC/TMC the Southerners were represented by Southern political parties that were insufficiently representative of, and thus unable to control, the Southern military movement. By the beginning of the Addis Ababa negotiations, Joseph Lagu had obtained control of both the political and military wings of the Southern resistance movement. Hence, a united Southern resistance movement existed, probably for the first time in the history of the Southern Sudanese insurgency. Although it might seem reasonable to conclude that the Anya-Nya should have been represented at the RTC/TMC in order to add the needed implementability to the final treaty, it is certainly true, as Hayer suggests, that the Southern military resistance movement had no unified leadership, strategy or fixed ideology at that time, and thus their involvement in the peacemaking process might have been impossible.³⁸⁹ Moreover, as accounted for in this thesis, the Northern party to the conflict was in 1965-66 represented by a variety of political parties, all with their different personal and political perceptions and agendas, and probably most important: Significantly influenced by the sectarian power base of the main political parties. By 1972, the sectarian parties had been swept off stage, and replaced by a military government led by President Ja'far Nimeiri. Additionally, Nimeiri was pushed by both internal and external forces to end what had by then developed into a full-scale civil war in the South.

³⁸⁹ H.K. Hayer 2006 (MA thesis, University of Durham): 36.

Considering these factors, it would be an overstatement to claim that the absence of strong mediators was the single factor that tipped the scale in favour of the warmongers rather than the peace-seekers in the Sudan in 1965-66. As already mentioned above, the rational grievances of the Southern politicians were to a large degree met by the compromises agreed upon in the recommendations that the TMC presented to the Prime Minister in June, 1966. Although some disagreements still remained, compromises were reached that may have functioned as a framework for a new administrative and constitutional system in the Sudan. One issue that was neglected in those recommendations, though, was how to conciliate the populations of Southern and Northern Sudan, to enable their societies to cooperate and function in a productive and positive relationship.

As pointed to above, the Sudanese politicians negotiating at the RTC/TMC process remained suspicious towards each other, and neither the Prime Minister nor the exiled Southern politicians and military leaders worked in any way to calm the hostile emotions that had built up in their societies throughout the last ten years. Quite the contrary, even those directly involved in the negotiations on diverse occasions made statements to the media that were critical towards the talks that were conducted inside the TMC. Such statements were made by both Hasan al-Turabi (ICF), Prime Minister Mahgoub (Umma Party) and Gordon Muortat (Southern Front) during the TMC negotiations.³⁹⁰ Hence, actors that were directly and personally responsible for the success or failure of the RTC/TMC process deliberately counteracted the efforts, and effectively worked as spoilers of the peacemaking process.

The rhetoric resorted to by some of the actors is also likely to have worked to undermine conciliation between the conflicting societies. As seen in this study, leading Sudanese media printed editorials and articles that were severely critical against admitting concessions to the out-group.³⁹¹ Kaufman argues that prohibiting such statements and articles in mass media is important for the successful implementation of a peace agreement. As they work to fuel popular hostility, they contribute to the undermining of both the peace process and the implementation of its

³⁹⁰ See Chapter 4 above.

³⁹¹ "Arab Criticism on the Round-Table Conference" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents) and "Southern Criticism on the Round-Table Conference" ("Sudan Informazioni" News Agency documents).

eventual agreement, because it counteracts any effort to prepare the masses in the conflicting societies on how and why peace should be preferred before war.

Kaufman recommends a detailed plan for conciliation efforts that he considers likely to increase the probability of successful implementation of ethnic civil wars.³⁹² No such conciliation efforts were instigated during the RTC and TMC negotiations. Rather, the violence increased steadily throughout 1965 and 1966. As Kaufman states, continuation of the violence works as a spoiling factor to any peacemaking effort, as it leads to suffering which, in turn, increases hostility between the conflicting societies. This is the main reason why a cease-fire is necessary as a precondition for peace negotiations, and thus, this factor can be added to the list of factors that prevented effective peacemaking in the Sudan in 1965-1966.

It is likely that the ineffectiveness of the Sudanese democratic institutions added to this situation and worsened the conditions for peacemaking in 1965-1966. Personal conflicts materialised in a constant bickering for power, often on personal rather than political reasons, and such power-struggles led to a highly unstable political situation. The insistence by the Umma Party, NUP and the ICF on holding elections only in the Northern parts of the country in April 1965 and the fragmentation inside the Umma Party, which resulted in three different governments over a period of four years, substantiate the claim that the political system was weak and ineffective: The political parties were preoccupied with ensuring or consolidating their own power rather than solving the larger issues, especially that of the Southern conflict, which held deep roots into the question of national identity and what it meant to be a Sudanese. Possibly, the root causes of this problem can be found in the Sudanese democratic system. The sectarian nature of Sudanese politics, referred to several times in this thesis, created stable constituencies based perhaps more on religious affiliations than on political convictions. However, the sectarian political leaders could not totally overlook the practical political interests of their voters; in fact, sectarian politics required that the leaders were more concerned with sect and party than with the country as a whole. That is why sectarianism has been such a destabilizing political

³⁹² See Chapter 1 above.

factor in the Sudan since independence. This weakness in the Sudanese democratic system was influential in undermining the work of the RTC and TMC.

Conclusion

This thesis has accounted for the background and perceptions among the actors of the Round-Table Conference (RTC) and the Twelve-Man Committee (TMC). It has also given a historical presentation of those peace negotiations: Their political context, their proceedings, and their main subjects of discussion. The primary sources that have laid the ground for this thesis has never previously been analysed with the intention to discover the reasons for the failure of this peacemaking process, and some of the conclusions arrived at in this Chapter introduce new perspectives on this question.

Despite the sincerity of Prime Minister Khalifa when initiating the RTC, the timing was probably detrimental to its success, as he might have been among the few directly implicated actors who honestly believed in a political solution to the problem at that time. As argued above, none of the conditions that are perceived to be critical for a successful initiating phase were fulfilled at the convening of the RTC/TMC peacemaking effort. The relatively low costs of war, the imbalance of the military strength between the combatants and, adding to this, the sectarian basis of Sudanese politics, which implied that the sectarian political leaders were more concerned with their own sectarian interests than with national concerns, were all signs that this peace process had small chances for success from the beginning.

When negotiations finally began, they suffered from low motivation on both sides. Both Southerners and Northerners exploited this opportunity for personal or political agendas, and although a treaty was finally signed, it is unlikely that the politicians believed in its implementation. The distrust between Northerners and Southerners prevailed throughout the negotiations and beyond their conclusion, and some of the negotiators expressed their doubts publicly even while the negotiations were still in progress. The hate and mistrust that they by such actions facilitated among their own constituencies probably laid the ground for increased support for the war among the Northern and Southern populations, as they were likely to strengthen the preconceived,

conflicting and hostile identities felt by the populations of those societies. In light of the theories of Walter and Kaufman, it seems likely that if this peacemaking effort were to have had a chance of being successfully implemented it would have had to deal with this hate and suspicion, both among the Sudanese leaders and among the Southern and Northern populations. As shown in this thesis, Kaufman argues that conciliation is imperative for successful peacemaking in ethnic civil wars because such wars are partially driven by 'mythical beliefs' about the out-group and that such conceptions must be replaced by more positive ideas based on better information about the facts of war as well as about the adversaries. In order to achieve this, it is likely that an influential mediator who enjoyed the respect of both Southerners and Northerners would have been required. Thus, the absence of such a mediator was probably one of the factors that contributed to the failure of the parties to refrain from hate-speeches and other obstructing activities. (Within the frames of this thesis, it is not possible to answer whether this would have been possible under the prevailing circumstances. This is probably an important issue to address, though, in future analyses of for instance the 'Naivasha' agreement of 2005, the result of which still remains to see, as the period of implementation is still in progress.)

Arguably, as long as both the Anya-Nya and the government ignored the work and the resolutions of the RTC and the TMC, the work of the politicians was of little value to the situation on the ground. As there was no effective cease-fire during the negotiating process, and neither the government nor the Anya-Nya were directly represented in it, it seems evident that achieving peace was not, in fact, a priority of any of the parties to the conflict.

So why, then, did the politicians spend so much time on these meetings? One possible explanation is that the TMC worked as an alibi for their alleged wish for a political solution, and that it thus legitimised continued fighting in the eyes of both the people and the politicians. As an ongoing negotiation process seemingly led them nowhere, the combatants could face their constituencies and claim that the out-group was to blame for the lack of results, and as long as the political option seemed to be a waste, the only solution left was to continue the warfare. Such excuses, that were exploited by both parties to justify their 'right' to continue fighting, could only be put forward and given any weight because of the absence of alternatives. So, there is a chance that

the RTC and TMC, although initiated as a sincere attempt to find a peaceful solution to the South-North conflict, ended up as quite the contrary: Fuelling the conflict into a full-scale civil war and simultaneously providing for the spoilers of the peacemaking effort a justification of the increasingly intensified fighting. As they were 'Making Peace while Waging War', the politicians undermined their own peacemaking efforts. For the same reason, the possibility of implementing the final agreement, which was weak from the beginning, was more or less annulled during the process.

The work of the RTC and the TMC were results of the first official recognition of the North-South divide in Sudan, and their resolutions and recommendations constituted the first systematic recording of the main issues, positions and depth of the conflict. This process of consciousnessraising may have contributed to or facilitated the negotiations in 1972 as well as the outcome of them. Whether they also had significance for the peacemaking process leading to the 'Naivasha' agreement of 2005 is an interesting question, which future research could clarify.

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[Note added on the front page: "This is an unofficial text ratified by General Joseph Lagu, Leader of the South Sudan Liberation Movement and Commander-in-Chief of the Anya-Nya, and Abel Alier on behalf of President Gaafar Nimeiry of the Democratic Rep. of the Sudan, on Monday 27 March, 1972, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia."]

Another note, added by R.O. Collins, and attached to the document, states: "This is the document which Joseph Lagu took to Addis Ababa to obtain amendments on the Agreement already signed by the Government and Anya-Nya delegations. But Nimeiry had already issued, as a national law, the 27th Feb. agreement ("made under my hands"). The new proposals – which shows the true feeling of the SSLM on the issue – were not accepted, except by some verbal assurances.

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