

**LESSONS FROM THE PAST?
APPROACHES TO CONFLICT AND PEACE IN SUDAN, 1899-1955**
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Synopsis

This paper explores how officials during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium addressed questions about violent conflict and peace in Sudan. What did officials think about conflict and peace, and how did they seek to prevent, manage or resolve conflict, or to build peace? The subject is worth exploring both as a matter of historical interest and for the sake of any bearing it may have on the present and future. Sudan's history in the fifty and more years since independence has been marked by troubles with conflict and peace, first as one country and then as two. What lessons are there, if any, for the present and future in the two Sudans, from the ways in which conflict during the Condominium period was prevented, managed or resolved, and peace was pursued? The paper touches also on general questions about the prevention and resolution of conflict, and the building of peace.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper explores what lessons there are, if any, for the present and future in the two Sudans, from the ways in which internal violent conflict during the Condominium period was prevented, managed or resolved, and peace was pursued. How did officials during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium in Sudan address questions about conflict and peace in Sudan? What did officials think about conflict and peace, and how did they seek to prevent, manage or resolve conflict, or to build peace? And can this subject say something of value towards general questions about the prevention and resolution of conflict, and the building of peace?

There is reason to explore this subject. Violent conflict and civil wars, short or protracted, are common. Ending such conflicts is usually hard, and it is often hard to build a stable, lasting peace in a country or territory even when an end to conflict has formally been agreed. South Sudan and Sudan are two examples, given their history of conflict and peace in the twentieth century and since. The first civil war from 1955 to 1972, and the short-lived Addis Ababa peace agreement; the second civil war from 1983 to 2005 and the Darfur conflict from 2003; the resumption of fighting in Blue Nile and South Kordofan when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement reached its end and South Sudan became independent in 2011; the eruption of conflict in South Sudan in December 2013: it is a fraught history, even if other countries from Afghanistan to Iraq, Somalia and the former Yugoslavia have also had troubled histories of conflict and peace during some of the same period.

By putting in my title the words “lessons from the past”, I am not privileging the past, or a *de facto* colonial era, as a source of lessons. But looking at the past can sometimes help us to look differently at the present. It can help us to ask different questions about situations today, and about responses to those situations. This is how changes for the better are sometimes made, for example changes in actions in the future – including changes, perhaps, in approaches to conflict and peace.

My interest in the subject arises because of my past academic research and writing, and my practical work and experience in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and related areas. And this paper has been made possible by the Sudan Archive in Durham, a wonderful resource; the Sir William Luce Memorial Fund, which generously provides the opportunity of the Sir William Luce Fellowship; and the Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, and Trevelyan College at Durham University, which provided a welcoming home while carrying out the research for this paper. To all of these, I am very grateful.¹

APPROACHES TO CONFLICT AND PEACE?

Sudan has had as many and more years of independence as it had as part of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, from January 1899 to 31 December 1955. Much excellent scholarship has been done on the history of the Condominium, aided by the Sudan Archive at Durham University, the UK National Archive (Public Record Office), and archives in Sudan. This paper draws primarily on the Sudan Archive in Durham and

¹ I would like to thank in particular Jane Hogan and her colleagues at the Sudan Archive. This paper was presented first as the Sir William Luce Lecture at Trevelyan College, Durham University, on 4 June 2015. My thanks go also to those who provided comments on the lecture.

some secondary sources; it touches on contemporary approaches to peace and conflict. This of course means limitations in perspectives and what can be concluded, but I will not be trying to make unreasonable generalisations in what I say and in my conclusions.

The type of conflict and peace addressed in the paper is essentially internal conflict and peace – that is, within a country, rather than between it and another (intra-state, rather than inter-state, if we use the formal terminologies of political science and international relations). However, there were of course inter-state aspects to the history of conflict and peace in Sudan from 1899 to 1955, from the hybrid arrangements under which foreign powers sought to rule Sudan, to the intrusion of the First World War and the Second World War, both of which had material repercussions affecting conflict and peace in the country.

These points noted, it is helpful to explore three contrasting types of approach to internal conflict and peace that can be seen in the Condominium period, and which broadly cover the range of approaches and methods. These can be summarised as military force, coercion and construction.

(i) Military force: forceful approaches to peace and conflict

The first type of approach to conflict and peace was *military force*. By this I mean approaches exemplified by military and “pacification” campaigns waged against rebellions or restive populations.² The first decades of the Condominium in Sudan saw many examples of local rebellions and the authorities using force to pacify the rebellious – the policy of pacification.

The military campaign that led to the creation of the Condominium, the Anglo-Egyptian invasion culminating in the Battle of Omdurman in 1898, was itself an exemplar of a forceful approach to peace and conflict: the rebellion of the Mahdi against Turco-Egyptian rule and the Mahdist forces’ capture of Khartoum, were responded to by military confrontation and eventual invasion and conquest. The violence in which the Condominium was born was that of conquest and overthrow, through which a new foreign rule was imposed on the Sudan.³

The Anglo-Egyptian desire to secure and extend their rule led to continued use of military force against Sudanese resistance and revolts through the following years. Resistance and revolts were many, from minor attempted messianic revolts in the early 1900s to Nuer resistance in the 1920s and a small uprising in Nyala in 1921. In a way, revolts and resistance never really went away – they only found new forms of expression and leadership, such as nationalism and the growing demand for self-determination and independence.

² On pacification during the Condominium, see for example MW Daly, *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898–1934* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 396ff; PM Holt, *A Modern History of the Sudan* (London: Weidenfeld, 1972), pp. 114–116; Peter Woodward, *Sudan 1898–1989: The Unstable State* (London: Lester Crook, 1990), pp. 4 and 28–30; and Douglas Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan’s Civil Wars* (Oxford: James Currey, 2003), pp. 10–11 and 18.

³ On violence and excesses during and after the Battle of Omdurman, see Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 3–6, citing remarks by Winston Churchill in *The River War*, vol. 2, 176 and 223–25, and remarks quoted in the biography by R. Churchill, *Winston S. Churchill* (Boston: 1966), vol. 1, p. 410.

In practical terms, the use of military force to address conflict and peace during these decades meant the deployment of army patrols. These patrols were at the time sometimes labelled “punitive patrols”, a description that reflected their methods, as several examples vividly show.

Cluppina, 1910

In 1910 Robert Vesey Savile, who was then governor of Kordofan, based in El Obeid, took part in a patrol into the Nuba Mountains, which amongst other things aimed to deal with a recalcitrant local leader called Cluppina. The patrol set out from El Obeid on 15 January and it was only at the end of the month that it reached the Tira Luman hills where Cluppina lived. Savile’s diary recording his travels in Kordofan and Darfur between 1910 and 1921 gives a flavour of the methods of a patrol, and a glimpse into local social and political realities.⁴

Jan 31st. ... Immediately on arrival at Kindirma we had sent off a message to Cluppina summoning him to come down to see me, otherwise I should go up to see him. ... [Later:] As Cluppina had not come in or sent any reply to my message, we left at 3.30 intending to camp under the East side of Cluppina’s hill. ...

Feb 1st. ... At about 8.15am we got our first view of Cluppina’s village. This village is scattered over the sides and the hills in the middle of a most beautiful valley with a running stream. On the hills on the far side of the valley a few men could be made out sitting on the top of the rocks, but the villages appeared to be absolutely deserted.

Half a Coy. of the CC fired a couple of long range volleys at the men on the skyline and then the CC advanced along the left side of the valley while our Coy. Xth with which Broadbent, Black, Cummins and I went, took the right side. Finding no opposition, we only burned the houses and grain and killed all animals.

Huddleston with 1 Coy Xth had gone round the right of one hill on the way up, and half the Coy. under Suliman Eff. Rabih got separated from them. By 1050 we had pretty well finished off all the burning of houses and grain and killing of animals and then assembled on a central hill in the shade of a large tree and had some lunch. After lunch we went on to a few tukls which we had overlooked in the morning and while finishing off those and killing a few more pigs, we saw some of the friendlies coming up from the direction of Acheron. After watching them doing a little looting and having a talk with one or two of them, we assembled on the water in the first valley and were there re-joined by the Camel Corps and half Huddleston’s Coy.⁵

Photographs taken by Savile or companions in the patrol provide some visual record of these events.

⁴ RV Savile, “Diary of tour in Western Jebels and Dar Howr”, January 1910, SAD.427/7/1-150; quoted sections are SAD.427/7/11ff.

⁵ Ibid.; regarding some terms and abbreviations used: “Coy.” is short for Company, and CC stands for Camel Corps; “Eff.” is short for Effendi; a *tukl* (or *tukul*) is a thatched hut or house.



Burning village on Tira Luman

Burning village on Tira Luman, Nuba Mountains (RV Savile, SAD.A12/32)⁶



Burning houses in Tira Luman, Nuba Mountains (RV Savile, SAD.A12/30)

⁶ This photo is also reproduced in MW Daly and Jane Hogan, *Images of Empire: Photographic Sources for the British in the Sudan* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 168.



RV Savile and companions during patrol against Cluppina (RV Savile, SAD.A12/36)

After a night in camp,⁷ the next morning Savile and company return to Kindirma where he receives information about the actions of another section of the patrol:

Feb 2nd. ... On arrival at Kindirma found a letter from Hadow giving an account of his share in the operations which resulted in 3 Nubas killed, 6 men, 11 women, 23 children captured also about 130 goats, about 30 head of cattle seized and some 50 pigs killed and 300 houses and a proportionate amount of grain stores burnt.⁸

In Kindirma Savile talks with a local man called Cherri who has come in to the village and agrees to convey to Cluppina an offer of amnesty if he will come to Talodi. That afternoon, departing Kindirma for Talodi, news comes that “some of our infernal ‘friendlies’ had this morning attacked and burnt Cherri’s village”, which Savile says he will enquire into when in Talodi.

Two days later, in Talodi, there is a piece of good news: “Cluppina came in about 5pm, so our expedition has been a success after all. Excellent!”

Lake Jorr, 1928

A notable example of a punitive patrol is one that was mounted in 1928 to Lake Jorr in what was called the Nuer Area in Upper Nile province. A formal typed diary account of this is provided by William Porter, who was then the inspector of agriculture in the area, but who was attached as Political Officer to no. 1 Company for this patrol, which was labelled at the time as Patrol S9.⁹ The patrol lasted from 1 January to 16 February 1928. The diary does not at the beginning say what the

⁷ A Sudanese army officer, UN peacekeeper or others who today camp in the Nuba Mountains might be interested in what it was like for Savile in 1910: “A bath and a change of clothes put new life into me having first drunk a lime juice and soda and 3 cups of tea. We dined at 7 and went to bed at 9, and slept like a log.” SAD.427/7/11.

⁸ SAD. 427/7/11-12

⁹ WA Porter, “Diary of No. 1 Coy. Equatorial Battalion on patrol S.9, Lake Jorr, Nuer Area, from Jan 1st to Feb 16th 1928”, SAD.700/11/7-15.

purpose of the patrol was, but alludes to it in later sections. The purpose was to avenge the killing of a British District Commissioner in Bahr el Ghazal, Capt. VH Fergusson, near Lake Jorr in December 1927.¹⁰

Daily entries summarise the patrol's actions and surrounding events. It begins benignly, with the patrol setting out seemingly quietly; then come small signs of what is to come – the setting up of camp with a wire zeriba around it, the spotting of scouts and sounding of alarms, the continuation of the patrol, the spotting of four Nuers and 300 head of cattle, on 4 January, and the first opening of full fire by the machine-gun section (“The Nuers ran away but all 300 cattle were killed”). On 7 January a section led by a native officer, with 90 carriers and “half the loads”, is sent to Lake Jorr, while the remainder of the Company move off northwards, apparently chasing Nuer who were moving between murahs (cattle camps) in the swamp.¹¹

From then on the picture becomes only more brutal and the actions of the patrol settle into a routine, recorded dryly in Porter's diary: setting up and striking camp; burning villages and collecting dura; burning grass; firing on Nuers spotted; killing cattle and goats; burning villages; spotting and coordinating with RAF planes bombing Nuer murahs; exchanging information with other patrols; taking prisoners; going out, burning, collecting, and so on. The following are some excerpts:

Jan 8th. Struck camp at 0630 hours and returned to PANYIDOK arriving there at 0900 hours. Luel column has arrived there. Bimb. Roberts took command of No. 1 Coy. and burned Panyidok village.

...

Jan 10th. Left Panyidok with empty carriers at 0615 hours for burning villages and dura collection. Burned all huts and collected 10,000 rotls dura which was dumped at Panyidok camp.

...

Jan 14th. O.C., Political Officer, one platoon and all carriers went out at 0620 hours and burned villages of Riari, Tiari, Lablab and collected 3,000 rotls of dura.

...

Jan 16th. O.C., Political Officer and one platoon left camp at 0610 hours and completed burning commenced on the 14th. Returned to WANKAI at 1600 hours and camped there.

Jan 17th. Struck camp at 0645 hours after burning remainder of dura dump and marched northwards. Burned huts en route and arrived at AMAIR at 0930 hours. Burned Amair village and collected dura in afternoon, making dura dump inside zerebba. Made camp at AMAIR. [end of 700/11/9]

...

Jan 20th. ...collected 6,000 rotls dura from Jalwal and burned Jalwal village. ...

¹⁰ Fergusson and his killing, and briefly the patrol, are mentioned by Daly in *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898-1934*, pp. 398-99. A memoir by Fergusson was posthumously published under the title *The Story of Fergie Bey*, “told by himself and some of his friends” (London: Macmillan, 1930).

¹¹ WA Porter, “Diary”, SAD.700/11/7-8. Regarding some terms and abbreviations used by Porter, besides *murah*: a *rotl* is a traditional measurement of weight, equivalent to around 450g or one pound; *dura* is another name for sorghum, a staple cereal grain; a *zeriba* (or *zerebba*, as Porter spells it) is a fenced enclosure, typically made by branches; “Bimb.” is short for Bimbashi, major; OC is Officer Commanding; SDF is the Sudan Defence Force (the army); and SGS is Sudan Government Steamer.

Jan 22nd. ... collected 10,000 rotls of dura from Gnopp. Gnopp village burned. ... A party of 10 Nuers were seen in the distance from Amair camp making towards the villages. Fire was opened on them. Five Nuers surrendered.

Jan 23rd. ... Aeroplanes heard but not seen at 0900 hours. Twelve Nuers surrendered bringing with them 76 head of cattle. ...

Jan 24th. Two aeroplanes seen bombing Nuer murahs E and SE of Amair from 0600 hours till 0800 hours. ...

Jan 25th. ... Native Officer with two sections and all remaining carriers and surrendered Nuers went out at 0600 hours and returned at 1400 hours with 8,000 rotls dura, having continued the burning of Gnopp.

Two aeroplanes seen bombing Nuers in swamps SE of Amair from 0600 hours till 0800 hours. Aeroplanes circled over Amair landing ground and one came down to within 2 feet of the ground in order to inspect. ...

Jan 26th. No aeroplanes seen this morning.

Native Officer with two sections and all the carriers and surrendered Nuers went out at 0600 hours and returned at 1400 hours with 8,000 rotls dura, having continued the burning of surroundin[g] villages. ... Requested that our desires re bombing be put out by a ground signal.¹²

2 February was, it seems, the last day of “dura collection and burning of villages”. The following days were taken up with gathering and transporting the dura and cattle back to Panyidok, with Nuer carriers being gathered from the area to do this, and then the Company itself moving from Wankai to Panyidok and finally, on 16 February, from there to the Lake Jorr meshra (landing place) to join the SGS Omdurman, a steamer bound for Bahr el Ghazal.¹³ Below this final entry the diary closes with a tally of the “Particulars of killed and captures”, which were 18 Nuers killed, 371 Nuers captured and surrendered, 400 cattle killed, and 1,076 cattle captured and surrendered. It does not say how many villages were burned. Looking through the diary, burning of huts and villages was done on some 14 days, and at least seven villages were burnt down.¹⁴

Photographs from the Porter collection in the Sudan Archive provide a picture of some elements of this patrol, from prisoners and captured cattle, to Nuer chiefs and interpreters, and a “cairn” that was subsequently built for the man whose killing prompted the patrol.

¹² WA Porter, “Diary”, SAD.700/11/9-13.

¹³ In mundane detail, the diary records that Porter embarked at 1030 and sailed for Bahr el Ghazal at 1500 hours, while “Bimb. N. MacLeod embarked on the SDF steamer ‘Metemma’ at Lake Jorr meshra at 1000 hours and sailed for Mongalla at 1500 hours”. SAD.700/11/15.

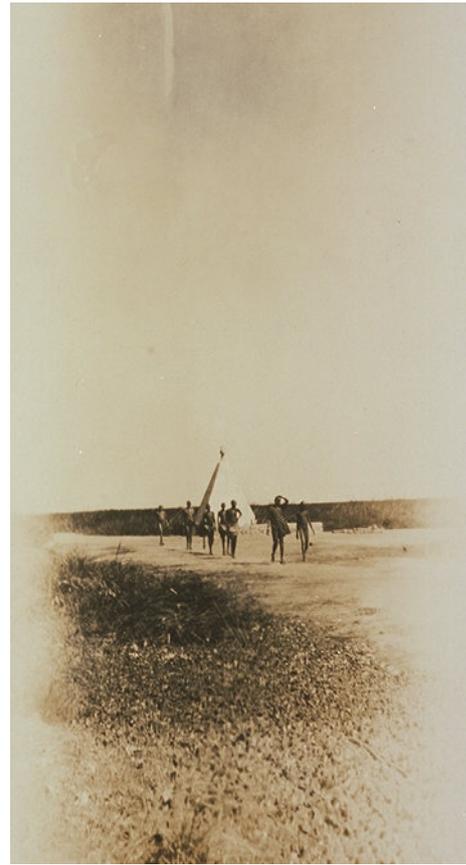
¹⁴ In 1929 and 1930 two men were convicted of killing Fergusson and were publicly hanged, one on a gallows transported by steamer and lorry to his village. Douglas Johnson (ed.), *Governing the Nuer: Documents in Nuer History and Ethnography, 1922-1931*, by Percy Coriat (Oxford: JASO Occasional Papers no. 9, 1993), p. xliii.



Captured Nuers, Lake Jorr Patrol, 1928 (WA Porter, SAD.A77/59)



Captured cattle, Lake Jorr Patrol (WA Porter, SAD.A77/60)



Left: Group of Nuer chiefs at Lake Jorr after Patrol S9, 1928 (WA Porter, SAD.A77/50)

Right: Cairn erected in memory of Capt. Fergusson at Jorr (WA Porter, SAD.A77/68)

Fiki Ali, 1915

Not all patrols ended up using overwhelming violence to enforce control and sovereignty, and to impose local peace. Of course, the hope for any government facing resistance and rebellion is that the threat of force will be enough to dissuade rebels and to maintain a kind of peace. And not all resistance was ended by patrols, with or without the use of force.

One example of a patrol which did not end violently was a patrol in 1915 against Fiki Ali, the Mek (chief) of Miri in the Nuba Mountains and the leader of a small uprising. The papers of Frank Balfour, at the time an inspector in the Nuba Mountains, provide an account of this and Fiki Ali's lucky reprieve.¹⁵ Amidst rumours about the First World War and possible setbacks for the government in Khartoum, in mid-1915 Fiki Ali and 200 men travelled to Kadugli, planning to attack the District headquarters in the night and seize the arms of the police and a paramilitary unit, the Territorial Company. When word of the plan leaked, Fiki Ali and his men abandoned it and fled to their redoubt at Tuluk in the Miri Hills. A patrol was dispatched but failed to capture him. Fiki was later arrested in Kordofan and brought to Talodi where Balfour presided over a court hearing which sentenced him to death (a sentence which was confirmed by the Governor-General, Reginald Wingate). However, during the

¹⁵ Balfour's main account is an unpublished typed article written in 1951, titled simply "Fiki Ali". SAD.303/8/26-39. Balfour went on to be military governor of Baghdad in 1919-20, before returning to Sudan for a series of posts, including governor of Red Sea and governor of Mongalla, until he retired from the Sudan Political Service in 1931.

subsequent three-day trek to Kadugli where it had been decided he should be hanged, Fiki Ali escaped. An effort was made to hunt him down, but was then abandoned because of insufficient men and resources.

As Balfour relates, the government in Khartoum was concerned not to commit extra resources in the Nuba at a time when it was beginning to anticipate a military commitment in Darfur – which was to happen in 1916, in the form of the expedition against Sultan Ali Dinar. Balfour was instead instructed by Khartoum to “make terms” with Fiki Ali, which he did, by exchanging messages and eventually meeting in a wadi in the Miri Hills. Fiki Ali subsequently was allowed to go to Khartoum where he explained himself in what Wingate later described as a “somewhat dramatic interview”. In a letter to Balfour, Wingate wrote:

I let him tell his story, which he did uninterruptedly for the best part of an hour and in a language which was not very easy to follow. ... In any case, the great point is that we are now saved a military expedition and at a time when all our available troops must be ready to stand by for any emergencies.¹⁶

Wingate was relieved, as surely was Fiki Ali, who was able to live out his years, while his followers were given land in Talodi for housing and later to cultivate.¹⁷ This ending to the story of Fiki Ali has its parallels in the deals governments in Sudan and South Sudan (and elsewhere) have often made with local rebels when they agree to renounce armed struggle in return for positions in government or the army, and integration of rebel soldiers and militia members.

Observations

Looking at how military force was used during the Condominium, it is striking *how* punitive patrols could be, and how persistent this method of responding to resistance and rebellion was. Burning houses, killing or taking livestock, and burning or taking grain, was collective punishment;¹⁸ and patrols using such methods were being carried out 10, 15, 25 and more years after the formation of the Condominium. How punitive such patrols could be, does bring to mind the much-quoted words of Tacitus, summed up as “They make a desert, and call it peace”.¹⁹ Furthermore, such punitive methods are common and persistent. They can be seen in some of post-independence Sudan’s campaigns to enforce control in restive regions: consider the recurrent burning of villages and aerial bombardment in the long civil war until 2005, in the Darfur conflict, and in the conflict in South Sudan which escalated in December 2013. And punitive methods persist in many other conflicts elsewhere in the world in the contemporary era, in varying scale and detail. Examples are numerous, from the destruction of villages in eastern Turkey in the 1980s and 1990s, through to the destruction of villages in Ethiopia’s Ogaden in the 2000s, the demolition of houses in Gaza and the West Bank in the 2000s, and actions by armed forces in Iraq over decades and through to the present.

¹⁶ Letter from Wingate to Balfour, 20 December 1915. SAD.303/8/15.

¹⁷ Balfour’s account of what subsequently happened to Fiki Ali differs slightly from Daly’s. See Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 132.

¹⁸ In 1949 collective punishment came to be internationally prohibited by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

¹⁹ The full sentence is: “Auferre, trucidare, rapere, falsis nominibus imperium; atque, ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.” (Tacitus, *Agricola*, 30)

It is striking too how concepts and ideas at a particular time can frame how resistance and rebellion are understood. In Sudan, from the Mahdist rebellion in the 1880s through to at least the end of the 1910s, the British were fond of the concept of “fanatics” and “fanaticism” as a way of representing those who forcefully resisted their control. The popularity (among the British) of the concept of the “fanatic” faded at some point in the Condominium, though apparently not totally by 1919. This is shown in an account by Robin Bailey, an inspector in Singa, Sennar, of an uprising in Singa in 1919 and the capture of its leader, Mohamed Sayed Hamid.²⁰ Bailey’s account of Hamid is burdened with the vague idea of “fanatic”:

Mohamed Sayed Hamid was a nephew of the Mahdi. ... His life at Singa was that of a luxurious debauchee. Yet many believed him to be the possessor of miraculous powers. ... At the beginning of 1919 I got information that his latent fanaticism was increasing. This is often the case with men of reputation whose mental balance has become weakened by debauchery.

In April the information got more emphatic. Finally some adherents of the Mahdi informed me secretly that he was getting dangerous. At last one day I heard that he and a band of fanatics proposed to murder us all at night. So we kept on the *qui vive* and nothing happened. We learnt afterwards that the fanatics armed with spears had approached Singa that night but, seeing our precautions, had put off the attempt.

We – the Governor and I – then decided to remove him to Khartoum. We came to this decision on May 26th.

This is a reminder of the need to be wary of how labels can be used in ways that obscure underlying factors. There are parallels between how “fanatic” was used then, and how “terrorist” and “extremist” have been used in the past two decades, often obscuring the local reality of who is fighting and why, and sometimes contributing to an inflationary melodrama.²¹

There is one other observation that the use of military force to maintain domestic peace in the Condominium, particularly in the early decades, invites. Thinking about manhunts for the leaders of certain armed groups in the present era, and sometimes premature claims about their death or capture, there are echoes with the past in Sudan. When Osman Digna, a resistance leader in eastern Sudan, was captured in January 1900, the *Times* newspaper in London wrote:

Osman Digna has been many times reported to have been captured, and many times his death has been announced. Hitherto he has always reappeared very much alive and as active and mischievous as ever. But there is an end to all things, even to the career of one of the most cautious and wily leaders who ever made personal safety the primary object of solicitude.²²

In the present era figures such as Mokhtar Belmokhtar, an Algerian leader of various militant armed groups, and Abubakar Shekau, of Boko Haram in Nigeria, have been the subject of similarly contradictory reports about capture or death. A century before

²⁰ “An account of the Rising near Singa, Sudan, June 1919, and the defeat and capture of the Ring Leader, Mohamed Sayed Hamid, by Robin Bailey”, SAD.533/1/3-26. A hand-written letter Bailey on 20 May throws in the remark that there “are reasons for supposing [MSH to be a] sodomite”. SAD.533/1/28.

²¹ To take a contemporary example, on 2 June 2015 a meeting of foreign ministers in Paris talked of a “Global Coalition” of 63 nations to counter the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Such talk did not suggest a sober perspective and understanding of the Islamic State group and, notwithstanding its foreign volunteers, the primarily domestic factors which drive it.

²² *The Times* newspaper, London, 22 January 1900, SAD.270/1/25.

them, Osman Digna's fame or infamy was particularly great, and was rendered by the writer on the *Times* in colourful fashion.

[T]he name Osman Digna is a household word, which for years recurred in the daily chronicle of the world's doings with as great frequency as that of the occupant of any stable throne. ... [H]e may be said to be for Europe the truest embodiment of the great upheaval of barbarism and fanaticism which, as we may somewhat confidently believe, has now been finally brought to an end. ... If it be asked how he maintained his influence over brave men such as his own tribe ... we fear the answer must be that he worked in the shadow of the spiritual chief and contributed for his own part only the terror inspired by his relentless cruelty.²³

The hyperbole and the search for Osman Digna bring to mind some of the rhetoric and searches for individuals in the present era, such as Osama bin Laden in the 2000s and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the Islamic State group after 2014, or some of the wilder claims made in 2012-13 about militancy in northern Mali.²⁴

(ii) Coercion: coercive approaches to conflict and peace

The second broad type of approach to internal conflict and peace was *coercion*. By this I mean coercive measures that did not involve the use of military force, but were essentially coercion by the police and the law, such as preventing or breaking up protests, arrest and detention, and censoring the media.

Resistance to rule by the Sudan Government (as it called itself) was at root driven by resentment about being governed by outsiders. At times, especially in provincial and rural areas, the immediate or proximate cause of resentment was taxation or, as it was called in the early days of the Condominium, "tribute". Government officials undoubtedly had some understanding of what caused resentment and resistance, even if they didn't understand fully the reasons. Balfour provides a wry description of factors of resistance in the Nuba Mountains in 1915:

In those days the Nuba had not long come under the rule of law. He still resented the curtailment of his habitual pastime of having a scrap with the cattle-owning arabs who roamed the plains, in which were set like islands the hills which were the Nuba's home. ...

Another cause of recurring friction with the Government was the payment of the very exiguous tribute assessed on each hill. Although it was small, it was not always easy to pay, even if the will to do so was there. ...

Such were the causes which led to periodic minor revolts against authority by a primitive – in the sense that they wore no clothes – but well organised and virile people. From time to time a hill went 'asi' (to rhyme with 'classy' and having no connection with posteriors), a word which meant locally something nearer to insubordinate than rebellious.²⁵

As time passed, during the Condominium, discontent in the cities of Sudan about foreign rule was increasingly manifested not only by rebellion, but by protests and expression in a growing press. Some nationalist unrest, such as that associated with the White Flag League in 1924, was also influenced by events in Egypt.²⁶ Some was still responded to by military force, as was the case with the November 1924 mutiny by a battalion of the Sudanese army in Khartoum. But coercive policing measures to prevent the escalation of a challenge to the government were common and evident in

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ In 2013 the French defence minister, the British prime minister and a number of other European officials described militancy in northern Mali as an "existential threat" to Europe.

²⁵ Balfour, "Fiki Ali", SAD. 303/8/26-39.

²⁶ PM Holt, *A Modern History of the Sudan* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1972), pp. 130-32.

any number of protests and incidents – as the following examples illustrate – and protests became more frequent.

Protests, 1946

In remarks about Egyptian delegations visiting Sudan, in his monthly letter to governors in February 1946, the Civil-Secretary, James Robertson, warned that “Demonstrations and rioting may occur in some of the larger towns if riff-raff and corner-boys are excited and suitably financed by politically-minded agitators.”²⁷ In April 1946 “minor demonstrations” occurred in Atbara, Berber, El Obeid and Halfa about the return of secondary schoolboys after the early closure of their schools in Omdurman, Wadi Seidna, Atbara and elsewhere. The closures followed “schoolboy troubles” resulting from “all this political excitement”, according to Robertson. Riots occurred in Port Sudan twice that month. The reaction of the government and police is glimpsed in a succinct account of one of these protests, contained in the *Sudan Herald*, an English-language newspaper of the time:

In Port Sudan, on Sunday 14th, a small crowd of some 200 students and hooligans paraded the streets in apparent celebration of Sudan Day and broke a number of windows in the business premises of European firms. The demonstrators were duly dispersed by the police and a number of arrests were made. The material damage was small. The demonstration was looked upon with disfavour by the general public.²⁸

Who was meant by “the general public” and whether it was true that they looked upon the demonstration with disfavour is not clear from the newspaper’s short account. In the same period a protest also occurred in Omdurman about the case of a girl baptised by a missionary. Robertson’s account of this last item shows something of the authorities’ approach to the media. Explaining the case, Robertson wrote in his monthly memo that there had “been a good deal of unsatisfactory material in the papers, both in Egypt and the Sudan”.²⁹ The government had therefore officially warned two newspapers, *Sawt el Sudan* and *Rai el Amm*, that they faced being suspended unless they mended their ways. In June the government suspended *Sawt es Sudan* for a fortnight “on account of a series of numbers which were exceedingly anti-Government and stupidly provocative”.³⁰ The measures taken against newspapers did not stop here. *Nil* was being sued (apparently by the government) for defamation; the government had put two Egyptian newspapers on a “prohibited list” because of attacks on the Governor-General and the government; and it had confiscated the 29 May issue of *Akher Sa’a*.³¹

El Fasher, 1952

Policing and the application of justice could also struggle to prevent or end unrest. An example of this is the response to several riots in El Fasher in 1952, described in an annual report for Darfur in 1951-52, written by Bill Henderson, the governor of Darfur at the time. This and a letter by Henderson provide an interesting picture of how the authorities sought to maintain law and order in this particular situation, and how they would record events. The riots, Henderson relates in his annual report, began on 3 February:

²⁷ JW Robertson monthly letter to Governors, no. 94, 6 February 1946, SAD.524/10/1.

²⁸ *Sudan Herald* newspaper, Khartoum, 16 April 1946, SAD.509/6/3.

²⁹ JW Robertson monthly letter to Governors, no. 97, 11 May 1946, SAD.524/10/16-17.

³⁰ JW Robertson monthly letter to Governors, no. 98, June 1946, SAD.524/10/20ff.

³¹ *Ibid.*, SAD.524/10/22.

A mob, mainly Felata and “persons known to the police”, was shepherded through the suk on the morning of February 3rd, met and stoned the DC near the Council buildings, and was dispersed. Later it reformed and besieged him in his office until again dispersed by tear gas.³²

The next day the mob attacked the Mudiria (provincial offices), then retired, planning to riot again the next day; but then they did not do so, because they had found (says Henderson) “that they had gone too far for public opinion”. Instead, at midday the next day:

the Western Arab Corps, roused from their beds in the small hours somewhere south of Jebel Marra, came pouring in with bayonets fixed and voices raised in song.

The ring leaders were arrested without further trouble and given exemplary sentences, but the whole thing left a nasty taste behind it.³³

In the same report Henderson says that the police, backed by a “tactical reserve of guaranteed prisoners armed with pick-helves”, managed to quell the riots without loss of life or serious injury. Looking back on the quelling of the riots, from the comfort of six months later, Henderson allows himself to quote from John Dryden’s poem “Absalom and Achitophel”, to say that the crowd had shown itself wise.³⁴ This is more sanguine than Henderson had been in the immediate aftermath of the riots. In a letter which he wrote in El Fasher to James Robertson, the Civil Secretary in Khartoum on 6 February (the day after the Western Arab Corps had arrived), Henderson said that the police and army had made a “salutary show of force” and that he had asked for a couple of platoons of riot squads from El Obeid.³⁵ His priorities were to arrest the culprits, imprison them, and organise their trial. He says, regretfully, that the intelligence he and his staff have on what is happening is “absolutely NIL”, and he ends his letter warning that with a “bewildered police and army and officers with divided loyalties”, he sees “no prospect of keeping the peace”.³⁶

For an expression of general policy about protests and riots, one can look at an address given in Khartoum by Robertson in the same month as the riots in El Fasher. In it Robertson says that since October 1951 he had been following a “policy ... that demonstrations and processions, riotous public meetings and so on should as far as possible be dispersed before they form.”³⁷ This supported the objective of maintaining law and order and the government’s policy “to hasten the handing over of political power to the Sudanese”. That policy, and the associated British interest in managing Egyptian political ambitions in Sudan, and in managing the development of nationalist and electoral politics in Sudan, had implications for the manner of government across the country, including in Darfur.³⁸

³² KDD (‘Bill’) Henderson, “Darfur Province Annual Report 1951-1952”, dated 28 August 1952, SAD.534/14/41. According to Henderson, the riots were partly the result of political agitation by four Felata students who had returned from El Azhar University in Cairo, making claims about government plans for Darfur to become a southern province and to double taxes, playing on grievances about tobacco royalties and working up anti-Christian feeling.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., SAD.534/14/33.

³⁵ KDD Henderson letter to JW Robertson, 6 February 1952, SAD.529/12/5-11.

³⁶ Ibid., SAD.529/12/10.

³⁷ JW Robertson address to Commandants’ Conference, 23 February 1952, SAD.529/12/29.

³⁸ For an account of Darfur in Sudanese politics in this period, see MW Daly, *Darfur’s Sorrow: A History of Destruction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 171-77.

Observations

The use of coercion and non-military coercive measures to maintain order and the kind of peace that prevailed in Sudan during the Condominium perhaps contains little that is surprising to the present day. Policing during the Condominium suffered from many shortcomings,³⁹ and as in El Fasher in 1952, and elsewhere, the authorities sometimes called on the army to back up the police. But it is interesting to note how common protests and riots were in Sudan, especially in the later years of the Condominium; and it is interesting to note too the willingness of the government of the day to use a heavy hand and censorship to police the media and to police or break up protests. Protests, the use of force against them, and censorship of a lively media, have been perennial features of Sudan since independence, and elements of this pattern have been seen in South Sudan since its independence.

(iii) Construction: constructive approaches to conflict and peace

The third broad type or category of approach to conflict and peace in the Condominium can be summarised as *construction*. By this I mean constructive measures taken in support of self-determination, development and good governance – measures which did not involve either military force or coercion by the police and the law. Under this heading much can be included – too much to examine in detail here. Examples are:

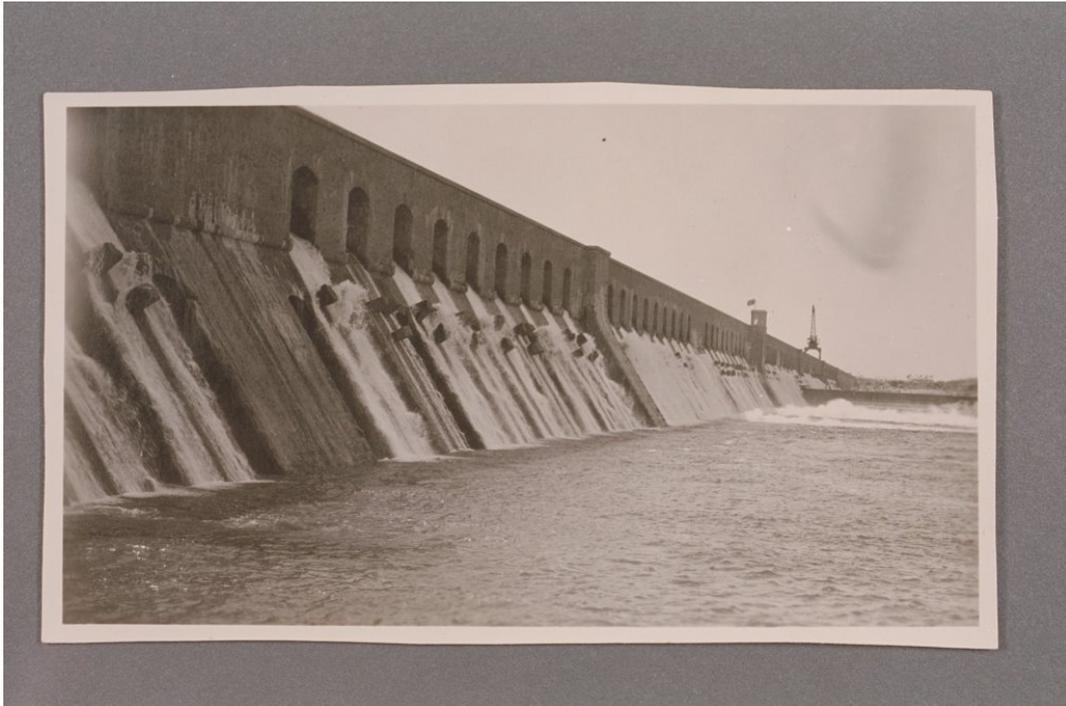
- Support for local mediation and management of conflict, for example on the eastern Sudan border with Eritrea, in 1946.
- Demobilisation of troops, notably after the Second World War.⁴⁰
- Economic and infrastructural development, such as the Gezira Scheme, and the building of roads, railways and dams such as the Sennar Dam (shown below).
- Employment generation, e.g. agricultural development projects in Upper Nile and Tokar (see photo below), and financing for cultivators.⁴¹
- “Sudanisation”, after the withdrawal of Egyptian soldiers and officials, and in the run-up to independence.
- The development of a professional and politically neutral civil service.
- The establishment of an electoral parliamentary system of government.

Most of these actions and undertakings contributed *indirectly* (rather than directly) to preventing conflict and building a peaceful country. So far as they were justified or rationalised, it was in terms of building and developing a country. Some actions and initiatives, such as support for mediation of local conflicts and to a lesser extent demobilisation, made a more direct, immediate contribution to peace and security.

³⁹ On the development and weaknesses of policing, see WJ Berridge, *Under the Shadow of the Regime: The Contradictions of Policing in Sudan, c.1924–1989* (Durham University PhD thesis, <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/1412/>, 2011).

⁴⁰ Robertson’s papers provide a useful record of how the demobilisation in 1946 of various categories and cohorts of SDF was handled. See, for example, JW Robertson, SAD.524/10/8-11, and *Sudan Herald*, 26 April 1946, SAD.509/6/17.

⁴¹ In a report about a project in 1926-27 to introduce cotton farming in the Eastern District of Bahr el Ghazal, WA Porter (of the Lake Jorr Patrol) claimed it had a marked “civilising effect” on the Nuer. SAD.700/11/2-6.



Inauguration of the Sennar Dam, 1926 (WJR Andrews, SAD.1/12/41)



Tokar Agricultural Show, 1934 (WA Porter, SAD.A78/48)

Managing local conflict

The effectiveness of the Condominium authorities in mediating, managing or resolving local conflict is a larger subject than can be explored here, and it would be wrong to overstate or understate the effectiveness. But it is helpful to this paper to consider briefly some contrasting examples of mediation and management of local conflict during the Condominium.

The combination of the Sudan Government and “Native Administration” during much of the period formally meant that the government provided some support for traditional authorities to manage and resolve local inter-communal conflict. Thus, for example, in the 1940s Nuer sub-groups organised a number of conferences in Fangak, Upper Nile, with the aim of improving relations among them. This established a tradition of holding such a conference in Fangak every five years, which lasted until

1971, shortly before the system of “Native Administration” was formally abolished.⁴² All the same, government officials could still find themselves directly involved in dealing with local fighting even in Fangak itself.⁴³

Local Sudanese authorities typically led local initiatives to end conflict. In eastern Sudan, for example, in 1946 leaders from the Beni Amer and the Hadendowa agreed an amnesty or reconciliation, mediated through the “good offices of the Kassala holy men”.⁴⁴ The agreement aimed to put an end to inter-tribal raiding and unrest which had affected the border region since the end of the war in Eritrea. A hand-written copy of the agreement’s wording (held in the Sudan Archive) shows that the one-page agreement resembled simple inter-communal agreements in other parts of Sudan both during and since the Condominium period, expressing a shared desire to put an end to fighting which has caused death and injury, to reconcile and to live in peace, “free from the hatred which was between us”.⁴⁵

All the same, lasting truces and reconciliations were not the norm, and in parts of the country inter-communal violence was persistent and difficult for the government to stay abreast of, let alone do much to address. In an annual report on Darfur in 1949, the governor, Bill Henderson, wrote that “the basic security problem in Darfur remained essentially one of controlling isolated tribal units grazing in other men’s country.”⁴⁶ The “northern nomads” still had plenty of firearms, and needed them to defend themselves against neighbours to the northwest; the situation in the south of Darfur was no better:

The peace of the Southern District of Darfur was threatened by unnecessary and vexatious boundary disputes between Habbania and Rizeigat, Habbania and Beigo, and Taaisha and Gimir which dragged on through the year and absorbed a good deal of administrative time. Neither Nazirs nor District Council came very well out of these, and it was clear that the latter was as impotent as UNO to deal with a clash of strong personalities amongst its members.⁴⁷

Two years further on, the situation regarding inter-communal conflict and local peace was little better. In a section on “Local affairs” in his annual report for Darfur in 1951-52, Henderson wrote:

20. The Zaghawa, whose behaviour since the resignation of Malik Mohammedein was perhaps too good to last, provoked during the summer a great outburst of fury from Fasher District. Although it is maintained in Kuttum District that the blame rests in part on their cousins from French territory, they have obviously relapsed here (though not apparently elsewhere) into their old habits. At home they are busy as usual in dissensions and petitionings, not without reason in Dar Artag, where the Malik has not been keeping the rules.

21. Hilif wells, where the Zaghawa impinge on Meidob, Berti and Zayadia, has no local authority to deal with disputes and disturbances. It has been obvious for some time that local mandubs should be appointed but the Council can’t afford it. This vast poverty-stricken district with its heavy public security commitments seems likely to be always struggling to foot unavoidable bills.

⁴² Mark Bradbury, John Ryle, Michael Medley and Kwesi Sansculotte-Greenidge, “Local peace processes in Sudan: A Baseline Study”, Rift Valley Institute report (2006), p. 39.

⁴³ For example, the senior veterinary inspector in Upper Nile, Anthony Polden, wrote in early 1951 that he had stopped a fight between two villages near Fangak. See AW Polden letter, 1951, SAD.995/2/8-10.

⁴⁴ JW Robertson “Monthly letter to Governors”, no. 94, February 1946, SAD.524/10/4.

⁴⁵ “Ali Mintai amnesty: Beni Amer–Hadendowa agreement, 1946”, in Arabic, SAD.478/10/2.

⁴⁶ “Darfur Province Annual Report for 1949”, 1950, SAD.534/14/10.

⁴⁷ By “UNO” Henderson appears to have meant the United Nations Organisation. SAD.534/14/11.

...

23. In the south Rizeigat-Habbani relations improved considerably but the Felata again refused at the eleventh hour to co-operate with the Habbania in a Kalaka Council. One finds it difficult to look kindly upon the Felata.

24. The Beni Helba gave two displays of lawlessness, the first being a mounted invasion of Dar Taeisha and the second the destruction of a Fur market. Only the good sense and authority of Sh. Ibrahim Guineh prevented more serious trouble.

25. The Tergam occupied a disproportionate amount of Government time after their Omda had defied orders to move his headquarters out of Dar Beni Helba and had been dismissed.⁴⁸

Striking in this brief summary are the extent and patterns of violent inter-communal unrest. Conflict over grazing rights, and the impact of building roads and water points, were a feature of Darfur in the 1950s, as they have been in subsequent decades.⁴⁹ It is also striking how limited the provincial government's involvement and ability were to prevent or resolve such unrest, and how the onus for dealing with inter-communal violence was on the local traditional authorities.

Observations

Constructive approaches to conflict and peace – such as management of local conflicts, demobilisation of armed forces and former combatants, and projects to produce economic development and to generate livelihoods – have been features of efforts to make and build peace in Sudan and South Sudan in the post-Condominium era and through to the present. Such approaches are found in peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts elsewhere in the world, with the mixture of success, failure and insufficiency that is common in countries and societies experiencing protracted conflict and crisis.

Evidently the ways in which Condominium rule contributed constructively to the development of Sudan and to what peace it had under foreign rule until the end of 1955, were not enough to prevent the future civil war. Government officials such as William Luce (adviser to the Governor-General on constitutional and external affairs) had been concerned by the “Southern question”. They perhaps did not anticipate how long the question would last: in a memo in March 1955 Luce said that of the difficulties lying ahead before the status of the country was finally determined, the southern question was “likely to present the most serious internal problem”.⁵⁰ This would continue to be the case for 50 more years.

During the preparations for independence in 1956, the mutiny in Torit in August 1955 accentuated concerns. The mutiny pointed at the latent conflict that would become the civil war, with Southerners discontented at getting what they considered “Northernisation” rather than Sudanisation, resenting the way the South was treated by the North, and wanting self-determination and self-rule. In this regard, a lucid piece of writing from 1955 was a report by Colin Legum, a long-time correspondent of the *Observer* newspaper (and anti-apartheid activist). A copy of the report was received by William Luce (perhaps he had commissioned it?). In the conclusion, Legum wrote that there were good reasons to think that the South would “in the end

⁴⁸ “Darfur Province Annual Report 1951-1952”, 28 August 1952, SAD.534/14/38-40.

⁴⁹ In Henderson's report, a section on “Migration” mentions clashes between tribes from North Kordofan and Darfur, and the complicating factor of the construction of a (dirt) road from El Fasher to Omdurman. Ibid., SAD.534/14/42.

⁵⁰ WHT Luce memorandum on the Sudan situation, March 1955, SAD.829/9/6-25.

ask for self-determination”, and that as that was what the north had claimed for itself, “when that day comes they cannot honestly deny it to the South.”⁵¹ That, indeed, was how it worked out.

CONCLUSIONS

Why would or how could approaches from 50 years or a century ago be instructive for the present or the future? As indicated at the beginning of this paper, I do not contend that the past is a singularly good source of lessons for the present, or that matters as complex as the resolution of conflict and the building of peace should be reduced to simple lessons about what “works”. However, the continuities, similarities and differences can be instructive or at least interesting.

Plainly at times during the Condominium there were significant external factors which impeded paying more attention to the domestic context. In 1914-16, the First World War impinged on the Sudan Government’s priorities, most notably in its concerns about the risk of Sudanese turning against Britain. During the Second World War Italy’s capture of Kassala, related incursions (as far south as the Boma Plateau, leading to the Battle of Tirru on the Ethiopian border), and the priorities of contributing to the “war effort”, imposed pressures on the Condominium government.⁵² And for years in the run-up to independence, officials spent considerable time managing Egyptian politicians’ attempts to make Sudan part of Egypt, rather than an independent state. Nonetheless, even allowing for these pressures, the ability of the Condominium authorities to manage conflict within Sudan and to foster peace was not great.

In terms of conflict and peace, there are apparent contrasts with the present era. It seems fair to say that today some efforts to foster peace are more systematic or methodical than in the past, although this does not mean that such efforts are consistent or enough (they surely are not). Sudan and South Sudan today are ruled by two sovereign governments and are host to some of the panoply of UN and other international organisations and mechanisms that exist, *pace* 1945, in order to maintain and promote peace and development. In 1900, 1915 and 1955 there were no Millennium Development Goals or Sustainable Development Goals. The order of the day for the imperial or colonial powers was the aftermath of the colonial scramble for territory (even with ambivalence about acquisition) and the challenge of administering and developing those territories for some kind of mutual benefit (sustainably, we might say now).

It would not be right to compare the Sudan Government of the Condominium to either the sovereign governments of Sudan and South Sudan after independence, or the apparatus of international organisations and presences in the two countries. But it is interesting to consider the contrasts and similarities between the multifarious organisations and titles then and today. Then it was War Office, Foreign Office,

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, SAD.829/9/25.

⁵² The impact of the Second World War on Sudan was less than that on some other countries and territories in Africa, but it was considerable when viewed within Sudan itself – from the raising of troops and deployments of the SDF into Eritrea and Abyssinia, to the expansion of manufacturing and public works, and Italian air raids on Sudanese towns. See HC Jackson, *The Fighting Sudanese* (London: Macmillan, 1954), pp. 32-85.

Anglo-Egyptian, Sudan Political Service; Sirdar, Governor-General, Sudan Agent, DC, ADC, Staff Officer, etc. Today it is the national ministries, officials and civil services of each country, the state governments and the local authorities; the UN and African Union peacekeeping missions (UNAMID, UNISFA, UNMISS); the special representatives of the UN secretary-general, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, the UN Country Team, and an alphabet of international organisations. These include elements of regional and international institutions and initiatives which aim to prevent and resolve conflict, and build peace, such as the UN departments of peacekeeping operations and political affairs, and the UN Peacebuilding Commission, none of which existed in the Condominium era.

The contrasts should not be used to flatter contemporary approaches to conflict and peace, as ineffectiveness and conflicting motives and objectives remain a problem today, as they were in the past. There is a lexicon of peace (conflict prevention, resolution and transformation; peacekeeping, peacebuilding; mediation, dialogue, Track I, Track II and III; reconciliation, stabilisation, and other terms), and many organisations, programmes and much spending are focused on peace. But civil war and internal conflict (much more than purely international conflict) continue to pose enormous problems. In 2015 the evidence of that is in Syria, Iraq, South Sudan, Sudan, the Central African Republic, southern Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, Yemen, Nigeria, Pakistan; it is in the 38 million internally displaced people (the highest figure in a generation).⁵³ Of course, in defence of peace efforts today it can be said that the amount spent directly on peace is still small, compared with what is spent on other forms of aid and on defence, even if much spending on aid can indirectly contribute to the peace and stability of a country and its people.

There are also aspects of the past and the present that are more similar than might be assumed. In the Condominium, officials of the Sudan Government moved between posts and countries, much as officials in Sudan and South Sudan, and diplomats, UN staff and aid workers, do today. Indeed, many Sudanese and non-Sudanese who have worked in the two Sudans also work for UN and other aid organisations in other countries affected by severe internal conflict, such as Iraq and Syria. Sudanese soldiers are generally not deployed abroad at present, but it is perfectly feasible that they might be again, much as in the Second World War the SDF was deployed outside Sudan, in an echo of the Sudanese soldiers who fought in Mexico in the 1860s.⁵⁴

Leaving aside contrasts and similarities, the approaches to conflict and peace during the Condominium can raise other questions about the present. Today international organisations, aid departments and think-tanks produce numerous reports focused on conflict and peace, and governments and civil society groups in countries affected by violent conflict sometimes do so. Compared with the paucity of such reports in the past, this seems admirable. But is there a weakness that is not being seen now but will be more apparent in the future? (Are such reports too little the products of either the government or the public of the countries concerned?) Thinking of elaborate “log-

⁵³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Norwegian Refugee Council, “Global Overview 2015: People Internally Displaced by Conflict and Violence”, May 2015.

⁵⁴ R Kirk, “The Sudanese in Mexico”, Sudan Notes and Records, vol. 24 (1941), pp. 113-130. See also Richard L Hill, *A Black Corps d'Élite: An Egyptian Sudanese Conscript Battalion with the French Army in Mexico, 1863-1867, and Its Survivors in Subsequent African History* (East Lansing: Michigan University Press, 1995).

frames”, quantitative monitoring, jargon and other elements of today’s practices for project design and reporting that were less present in the past, should these be questioned more? Are there virtues of past practice that have fallen into disuse?

To conclude, as I hope this paper has shown, and without saying that they are lessons, there are interesting observations to draw from looking at approaches to conflict and peace in Sudan in the past. It is striking how similar some of the *negative* methods of the past (punitive patrols, bombardment, banning of protests, censorship) are to methods after independence and through to the present. It is striking too, how some of the *positive* approaches and methods of the present era were absent then. Today initiatives for conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding are commonplace, and the language and institutions of peacemaking and peacebuilding which exist today have been normalised.

All the same, the construction of peace remains a long-term endeavour. As some aspects of the Condominium era in Sudan show, peace is not made or built overnight. So in thinking about international and Sudanese responses to conflict and peace in Sudan and South Sudan today and in the future, and in thinking about responses to conflicts elsewhere in the world, it is worth reminding ourselves of the need to take a long-term approach and to question what methods and approaches are being used, and what is not being done. One should not underestimate what it takes to build peace.

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