

Two Sudans Can Become Africa's Breadbasket

by Lawrence K. Freeman

July 17—On July 9, celebrations in Washington, D.C. (which I attended) and Juba formally recognized the existence of the new nation of South Sudan, which also created a new Sudan in the North. The future of both of these nations, and the nations of the the Horn and the Maghreb, will depend on both countries adopting a common mission, moored to serving the shared, vital interests of all Sudanese people.

It is essential that both nations work together. Their future existence depends on producing adequate amounts of food to feed their people, and, as quickly as possible, to export food surpluses to Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, where people are dying from malnutrition. People living in this region must be fed immediately; there is no higher priority. This does not resolve all the difficulties facing Sudan and South Sudan, but it identifies the critical pathway forward—the necessary common mission. Support for this mission will be the litmus test of true friends and allies of the two Sudans.

The lives of an estimated 10-12 million Africans are threatened in the Horn (Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Somalia); and Somalia is approaching conditions of famine. There are 80 million hectares (200 million acres) of arable land in the combined territory of Sudan and South Sudan, which is endowed with many rivers, in addition to the mighty Nile. Studies show that if this land were developed, it could feed a billion or more hungry people—250 times the 40 million people living in the two Sudans.

These facts have been known for decades, but have been ignored by the West, which has been more intent on splitting up Sudan than developing it. Realizing this huge agricultural potential would also provide a solution to the crisis in Darfur. The underlying cause of genocide in Darfur is the lack of food and water, a cause deliberately ignored by Western governments and the so called “pro-Darfur” advocacy groups. Instead, they

exploit the deplorable conditions of life in Darfur to foster a regime change in Khartoum, an effort still ongoing today.

Oil Is Not the Answer

People cannot eat oil; nor can they purchase adequate amounts of food from oil revenues, because the world is suffering from an actual food shortage. In addition, studies show that oil reserves are already diminishing.

To produce the tons of food necessary to halt the millions of malnourished “walking dead” in the Horn, and to build the economies of Sudan and South Sudan, it is urgent that the construction of technologically advanced physical infrastructure platforms begin immediately. Lyndon LaRouche, whose ideas are well-known to many Sudanese, has campaigned vigorously across the globe to lift Africa and other underdeveloped areas out of their abject poverty, by having governments use public credit to build “infrastructure platforms” that integrate what are otherwise seen as separate infrastructure projects in water, electrical power, and rail transportation, under one seamless, unified design.¹ This anti-free-trade approach, of directed credit for infrastructure platforms, in opposition to enslaving African nations to the now obviously bankrupt international financial system, must be applied on a regional and trans-continental level.

For the very survival of the Sudanese people, this concept needs to be assimilated by the leaders of both Sudans, and become the vision for the future of their bilateral relations. Some U.S. officials—those who are not part of the insane, liberal anti-Sudan lobby—have at least a dim understanding of the importance of developing the agricultural sector for the future of the two Sudans, but they are locked into foolishly “dangling” future U.S. investment in this vital sector as part of the carrot-and-stick, “pleasure/pain” approach to normalization of relations with Sudan. Rather than enforcing Adam Smith’s bestial “pleasure/pain” tactic on Sudan, if the State Department displayed some diplomatic wisdom and concern for the Sudanese people, it would embark on a policy of promoting economic growth now; not only as a gesture of good will, but to help create a propitious environment for future relations.

1. See “Making the Sahara Bloom: The Blue Revolution,” edited transcript of a Schiller Institute video, *EIR*, May 20, 2011.



UNAMID/Albert Gonzalez Farran

The question now is: Will the two Sudans be allowed to break free of imperial control, and undertake great infrastructure projects to the benefit of both their nations and people? Shown: Refugees return from camps in Darfur, Sudan, to their village in Sehjanna, South Sudan.

Who Gained from the Break-Up of Africa's Largest Nation?

A Nigerian friend of mine, who knows Sudan well, recently told me that it would have been better to deal with the problems of Sudan as one nation. This is undoubtedly true; however, there is no turning back now. All the fighting, and the violence continuing in Sudan and South Sudan today, are the results of the horrible way Sudan has been torn apart, setting brothers and sisters against each other, ripping Sudanese out of one area to be placed in another, like animals, according to irrational, “zoological” definitions of identity within a false geometry of Northerner versus Southerner.

Separation will be of no benefit to the Sudanese, unless there is an abrupt and radical change in policy. Both Sudans are suffering, and will suffer more, from the consequences of the global financial system entering its terminal phase of destruction—a crucial aspect of current reality that leaders of both nations need to sufficiently absorb for their strategic thinking about the future.

Khartoum has been forced to implement more austerity measures, attempting to manage the global inflationary effects on its economy, and a decrease in revenues, with devaluation of its currency, and a reduction

of government subsidies. This is not a durable solution.

South Sudan faces immense challenges, with the government naively hoping for succor from the West. The promise of \$300 million in U.S. aid, is a cynical joke, in light of the country's enormous needs: It is now the largest land-locked nation in the world (10,500 sq. km), and one of the poorest on the planet, with 90% of its roughly 8 million people living on \$1 a day. The World Food Programme plans to provide food assistance to 1.5 million out of population for 8 million in South Sudan, which also has the highest infant mortality rate in the world—150 per 1,000 births, and 2,054 maternal deaths per 100,000.

Despite fertile land and plentiful water, its agricultural sector is virtually non-existent, resulting in 20% of its population being chronically hungry. Only 20-25% of its people are literate, and only one-third have access to safe drinking water, according to the UN. Infrastructure consists of a mere 35 miles of black-topped roads in Juba. With a huge influx of people entering the new nation, and no way of employing them productively, its food deficit will only increase, adding to the already horrendous food shortage in this region. Sudan and South Sudan need a vision for their future. Without a mission, centered on a brute force implementation of LaRouche's concept of infrastructure platforms, South Sudan's existence will be precarious, and it will be a potential danger to Sudan and other neighboring countries.

The benefactors of the break-up of Sudan are those still adhering to the British imperial policy: dismemberment of nations into several separatist blocs. The creation of several “new Souths” in South Kordofan, in Darfur, in Blue Nile, leading to multiple states in conflict with each other in a Hobbesian “war of each against all,” is the intention of an anti-Sudanese imperialist faction. Elements in the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-(SPLM/A) are being played as an active tool in furthering this design. This is a dangerous venture, threatening the very existence of the newborn South Sudan.

Unfortunately, there are still too many in both

Sudans who allow themselves to be manipulated according to profile, contributing to the destruction of their own countries by acting out their “assigned roles” as if reading from the script of a tragic play. For example, did rogue elements in the SPLA, who illegally attacked Sudan forces in Abyei last May, do so as a deliberate provocation, anticipating that Khartoum’s armed forces would respond in the way they did, thus providing the U.S. with an excuse to halt progress on normalization?

Let there be no confusion or equivocation on who is responsible for the North versus South antagonisms that first surfaced violently in 1955; before independence in 1956; before the formation of the SPLA in 1983; before Omar al-Bashir became President in 1989; and before Darfur became a cause célèbre in 2003 for regime change: It is British imperial policy, with its hardcore racist, anti-human ideology, which intended the splitting up of Sudan. Who else is responsible for keeping the people of Southern Sudan backward, enforcing the most primitive conditions of existence under colonial rule, as an essential part of their colonial policy? The British forbade social and economic intercourse between the North and South under colonial law. They opposed by threat of criminal prosecution the “co-mingling” of Christianity and Islam.

U.S. Blocking Progress on Normalization

Speaking in Juba at the ceremony celebrating the birth of South Sudan, Sudan President Bashir asked the U.S. and international donors to “fulfill their pledges by lifting sanctions and providing money for development projects for infrastructure.” The Vice President of South Sudan, Riak Machar, who also addressed the crowd of tens of thousands in Juba, described Bashir as a “brave man of peace.”

Bashir is right in demanding an end to the oppressive sanctions that have been used to strangle Sudan’s economy for almost two decades. All Sudanese—every Dafuri, every Southerner, every Dinka and Misseriya in Abyei, and all those living in the North—have suffered greatly from these cruel sanctions. The Obama Administration is still using “pleasure/pain” tactics to dictate policy to Sudan, but with less effectiveness, as skepticism increases in Khartoum, now expecting that the U.S. will use any excuse not to fulfill its promises. The West is losing its leverage on Sudan.

According to recent statements by U.S. Administra-

tion officials, the U.S. has halted the process of removing Sudan from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, and lifting sanctions, until Khartoum resolves the conflicts in Abyei and South Kordofan. But can the U.S. be trusted, many ask, not to impose further conditionalities in the future for normalization to proceed, as has been done in the past?

Originally, Bashir was told that he must ensure that there be a peaceful referendum on Jan. 9, 2011, which he did, and that he must ensure a peaceful separation six months later on July 9, at the conclusion of Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which he did. On both occasions, the President traveled to Juba to guarantee a successful conclusion for South Sudan’s independence, for which he was promised that normalization would follow. Have the goal posts been moved again—as they were in 2005, when George W. Bush made similar promises to Khartoum in return for President Bashir signing the CPA (Comprehensive Peace Agreement)? Many in Washington who follow Sudan closely, including some who actively oppose the Khartoum government, know the answer is yes, but they are still going along with battering the government, all to the detriment of the Sudanese people they profess concern for.

Africans are speaking out against the U.S. and European “pleasure/pain” treatment of Sudan. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which consists of Sudan’s neighboring states, which were instrumental in the CPA processes, in their July 4, communiqué called for “the International community to keep its commitment to support the people of the Sudan by granting debt relief, removal of Sudan from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, lifting of sanctions and deferral of the ICC [International Criminal Court] indictment [of Bashir]. . . .” Earlier in the year, the African Union (AU) called for the removal of Sudan from the state sponsors of terrorism list, lifting of sanctions, and debt relief.

The AU has consistently attacked the ICC for its indictment of President Bashir. This past week, China called on the world to normalize relations with Sudan as soon as possible. Washington maintains that it can convince Sudan to acquiesce to its demands by enticing it with the benefits of “joining” the international community, which the U.S. alleges will open up new opportunities for foreign investment in Sudan. Given the accelerating disintegration of the global monetarist system, this is an empty offer.