AFRICA'S First Democrats

SOMALIA'S ADEN A. OSMAN and ABDIRAZAK H. HUSSEN

Abdi Ismail Samatar



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To Ismail Samatar and Halimo Abdillahi, who gave us the best values any parents could pass on to their children;
Amina Ismail Samatar, my beloved sister; and
Michael Watts, my mentor at the University of California, Berkeley

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Preface and Acknowledgments

This book has been long in the making because of the encounters I had over the past decade. The unprecedented political and humanitarian disasters in Somalia occupied some of my attention.[1] Further, it took me several years to collect the materials necessary to write the book. This involved tracing people on three continents who either had information about the period covered or knew actors. Translating some of the original documents from Italian into English took an unbearably long time, and family obligations took some of my attention.

The Somali people have been subjected to unimaginable cruelties over forty years by the military regime that destroyed their democracy, warlords who brutalized them, pseudoreligious leaders who failed to honor the basic tenets of Islam, corrupt political leaders whose sole aim has been to steal everything, a vicious Ethiopian and Kenyan military occupation masquerading as African brothers, and an international community that subverts Somali civic commonalities by endorsing sectarian agendas. But the Somali people's resilience continues to inspire.

On another plane and for over thirty years, Somalis have been told by experts that they cannot dream of rebuilding their democratic republic based on their inclusive cultural and Islamic values. My hope is that when young Somalis read *Africa's First Democrats*, they will be inspired by the dedication of those first Somali democratic leaders and their supporters, whose commitment embodied the hopes of a proud people and the essence of liberation.

Africanist scholarship has been dominated by antistatist political projects that assume that Africans do not have the capacity to build capable and effective states and therefore require tutelage from others.[2] This book offers an unambiguous example of the pioneering experience that challenges such notions. Ironically, the stories of these democratic leaders have not attracted the attention of many Africanists interested in Somali affairs or democracy, even though most of the material has been accessible for more than forty-five years. The common wisdom is that Africa needs and has never had ethical, competent, and courageous political leadership. However, this book contradicts that and shows that Africa's first democrats fulfilled that exemplary leadership, and their legacy is still relevant for Somalia and the continent. I hope this book will stimulate sustained debate about the nature of democratic leadership in Africa.

Working on this book gave me an exceptional opportunity to learn the country's political history anew through the practice of these leaders and their

civic associates. The two most critical lessons I take away are that the political rump that has dominated the landscape over the last forty years does not embody the history of the Somali people and their aspirations and that without deeply grounded ethical principles the management of public affairs is a soulless venture that leads to a sterile future.

During the course of the research for this book I had glimpses of the world that Africa's first democrats confronted. My experience in Somali studies over the last twenty-five years brought me face to face with the dismissive arrogance Africans encounter in their dealings with some Western scholars and experts.[3] Further, I also confronted, in my workplace, unethical behavior from supposed progressives whose deeds are similar to those of self-serving Somali politicians that Africa's first democrats challenged. Their principled leadership provides an excellent moral and political antidote to the resurgence of neocolonial projects in Africa. Developing an ethical center of gravity and remaining cognizant of the rights of others are part of an old African adage that has been battered over the decades and that Africans must dredge up and learn anew.

This book would not have been possible without the support of many people and institutions. Unfortunately, I am unable to thank all of them by name, but I am deeply mindful that dozens of people made vital contributions to this book. First and foremost, I am exceptionally indebted to the family of President Aden Abdulle Osman, who gave me access to several volumes of his diaries and who



President Osman with author in Osman's farmhouse in Janale, Somalia, 2001. Photo by author.



Author with Prime Minister Hussen in Taylor Falls, Minnesota, 2010. Photo by author.

enabled me to meet the president twice: on his farm near Janale in January 2001 and at his home in Mogadishu in 2005, just two years before his death. Despite his advanced age (ninety-seven in 2005), President Osman was deeply anxious about the fate of the republic he had so valiantly led. He inquired why educated Somalis were unable to unite and defend the cause of their people. He also asked me the town from which I hailed. I responded that I came from the small town of Gabileh and that I was one of the elementary school students who had welcomed him to the town during his 1963 visit. His reaction was "Baraka Allah" (Allah bless you). I am also beholden to Prime Minister Abdirazak Haji Hussen, whom we lost recently at the age of ninety.

Hussen gave me a number of documents and shared memories of his involvement with the Somali Youth League (SYL) and various Somali governments. I conducted over sixty interviews with him from 2000 to 2012. I am profoundly grateful for his patience for a decade and more. In addition, I thank Hussen's brother, Abdulqafar Haji Hussen, for his support. Abdulqafar sold one of his few possessions, his black bull, to pay his SYL membership dues in the 1950s. Others who offered invaluable information include the late Mohamed Yusuf Muro, a member of SYL who granted me three informative interviews in Brussels in 2004. Sheikh Mukhtar Mohamed Hussein, the late and last Speaker of the democratic parliament, generously gave me a useful interview in 2001 in Mogadishu. I am appreciative to Hussein Imaan and Shukri Sheikh Mukhtar for arranging the meeting. Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden, "Zoppo," who served as minister of Finance and also Interior in the 1960s, engaged me in an informative interview

in Djibouti in 1999. General Mohamed Abshir, the most respected commander in the history of the Somali police, granted two interviews in Minneapolis. I am grateful to Ahmed Qumane, deputy Speaker of parliament in the late 1960s, who confirmed in a long interview in Djibouti in 2006 some of the political shenanigans in parliament during the 1967 presidential election. Hashi Abib, who was cabinet secretary during the last democratic regime and the first few years of military rule, offered an insightful interview in Ottawa. General Jama Mohamed Qalib, the leader of the Somali police in Hargeisa in the early 1960s and who became the force's national commander, offered me precious information about the 1961 attempted coup in Hargeisa in two interviews. The late Ali Said Arraleh, director general of various ministries from 1960 to the 1980s, granted two long interviews in 2001 and 2003 in Nairobi pertaining to the leadership qualities of various Somali leaders. The late Ahmed Jama Jengale, former governor of Hargeisa region as well as director general of various ministries and minister of Public Works, provided priceless information in his new home in San Jose, California. Mohamed Ladane, an SYL member who journeyed to Addis Ababa to deliver an SYL message to the Ethiopian emperor in the 1950s, was kind enough to share that experience with me in an interview conducted in Arlington, Virginia. Abdullahi Insaniyeh, a member of the Somali parliament in the democratic period, from the historic town of Marka, provided information about the politics of the electoral process.

I salute others who supported me during this long sojourn. Among them are Hassan Khaire and Abdulkadir Eno and family. I am mindful of the friendship of the Hiil Qaran team: Abdimalik, Asad, Ibrahim, Bashir, Degmo, Abdirahim, Jangeli, Hamdi, Suaad, Ali, Yariiso, Hassan, Musse, the late Yusuf Mohamed and his mother Fadumo, Sahra, Shamso, Saharla, Deqa, Bashir, Abdifatah, Hussein, and Ahmed; the late Dr. Abdullahi and Ibrahim Mursal; and the young team in Mogadishu led by Mohamed and Abdiwahid. I am grateful to Ahmed Yusuf, Mohamed Adour, Mohamed Aden, Abdi Farah, Bashir, Jama Yusuf and Awo Xoogsade, Zuleikha Said, Abdirashid Duale, Ahmed Elmi and Raabia, Mohamed Somali, Mohamoud Omer, Aden Elmi, Mohamoud Gangi, the late Fatima Haji Asker and Mohamed Xoogsade, Mohamoud Jama and Urub, Said Ibrahim, Jane and Idriss Hassan, and Abdirashid and Amina for their steadfast support.

I especially acknowledge the assistance of my colleagues Eric Dregni and Jennifer Illuzzi for translating some of the documents from Italian to English. Eric also retrieved uncataloged and disorganized heaps of material from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives in Rome. I am indebted to Abdulkadir Aden Abdulle for his help with some of the translations. The archivists at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, and at the British National Archives in Kew Gardens in the United Kingdom provided exceptional service in retrieving precious documents. The reference librarians at the University of Minnesota,

especially Lynne Beck, gave me priceless assistance. I am especially indebted to my colleague Mark Lindberg, who produced quality maps and assisted me in cleaning up the photographs for the book. My thanks go to my coworkers Glen Powell, Allen Isaacman, Bud Duval, John Adams, Richa Nagar, Rod Squires, Bob McMaster, Susanna McMaster, Kurt Kipfmuller, and Dan Griffin, who contribute to a community culture that makes the University of Minnesota a magnificent place to work. Professors Janis Grobbelaar and Maxi Schoeman, both of the University of Pretoria, are two wonderful friends who created a stimulating intellectual environment during my visits there. I acknowledge the support of the College of Liberal Arts and the Graduate School at the University of Minnesota for partially funding the project. I learned from the wisdom of two external readers for Indiana University Press who provided excellent suggestions. Finally, I enormously benefited from the superior editorial skills and generous advice of Dee Mortensen and her team at Indiana University Press and the incredibly skilled copyediting of Mary Ann Short and Rebecca Logan.

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President Osman and Prime Minister Hussen dedicated their long lives to the cause of the Somali people and to a democratic political order. My last conversation with Hussen, a few weeks before he returned to his Allah, made clear to me his unwavering conviction of the most appropriate way to Somali salvation as being a democratic political system anchored in professionally autonomous public institutions. At the age of ninety he was as spirited about the civic cause of the Somali people as when he was prime minister in his forties. May young Somalis and other Africans heed the wisdom of these democratic trailblazers!

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Selected Dates

1908 or 1909	Aden Abdulle Osman is born
1925 or 1926	Abdirazak Haji Hussen is born
1941	Osman establishes his business in Belet Weyne
1943	Somali Youth Club forms
1944	Osman joins SYC
1945	SYC becomes Somali Youth League
1946	Hussen joins SYL
1940–1950	Britain controls all Somali territories except French Somaliland
1946	Bevin plan for Somali territories is presented to the four-powers commission
1948	Four-powers commission visits Somalia
1948	January, Great Mogadishu Riot occurs
1948	Abdullahi Issa leaves for New York via England and France to lobby for the Somali cause
1950	April 1, Italy takes over Southern Somalia as trusteeship territory
1951	Territorial council in Mogadishu is created with Osman as co-chair
1954	Britain cedes Haud and Reserved Area to Ethiopia. Demonstrations take place in all Somali territories. Discussions about unification of the two territories begin between British and Italian Somali leaders.
1956	Haile Selassie declares that all of Somalia historically belonged to Ethiopia
1956	First territorial-wide election makes Osman assembly Speaker. First Somali government forms, and Abdullahi Issa is nominated as prime minister. Hussen is elected as SYL president.
1957	Hussen resigns as SYL president, and Haji Mohamed Hussein is elected president
1958	Haji Mohamed Hussein is fired as SYL president, and Osman is elected as SYL president

1959	Osman resigns as SYL president, and Sheikh Issa Mohamed is elected as SYL president
1959	Pan-Somali conference is held in Mogadishu
1959	Second National Assembly election in the trusteeship is held, and Osman is reelected as Speaker of the assembly
1958–1960	Draft constitution is developed
1959	Legislature in Hargeisa passes a motion for Somali unification
1960	Northern and Southern Somali conference in Mogadishu agrees to unification
1960	June 26, British Somaliland becomes independent, and blue flag with white star is raised in Hargeisa to inaugurate independence day. July 1, trusteeship becomes independent, and the two Somali territories unite to form the Somali Republic with its capital in Mogadishu.
1960	July 5, Osman is elected as provincial president of the Somali Republic. Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee is later appointed prime minister
1961	January, Act of Union passes in Somali parliament
1961	June 20, constitutional referendum is held
1961	Osman is elected as president for six-year term
1961	December 11, attempted coup in Hargeisa is foiled
1963	Soviet-Somali military pact is signed
1964	January, Ethiopia-Somali border war erupts
1964	March, parliamentary election in Somali takes place
1964	June, Hussen is appointed as prime minister
1965	Radical civil service reform takes place
1967	June 10, Sharmarkee is elected as president of the republic. Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal is appointed prime minister.
1967	June 30, Osman resigns as president so that President Sharmarkee can preside over Independence Day celebrations
1968	Hussen leaves SYL and forms the independent Democratic Action Party
1969	March, parliamentary elections are held
1969	October 10, President Sharmarkee is murdered
1969	October 21, military coup is staged
1969–1972	Osman and Hussen are held in prison by the military

AFRICA'S FIRST DEMOCRATS

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1 Leadership in Africa

Two intertwined specters are haunting the African continent, and most particularly the Somali people.[1] They are the debilitating absence of leadership[2] fit to meet the complex imperatives of citizenship and national development and the dearth of accountable and effective state institutions that can sustain civic life where leadership is lacking. Inspiring and capable leadership and functioning state institutions are the two critical instruments necessary for development, but each one alone is insufficient to successfully confront the challenges of development and national identity formation.[3] Most of Africa labored under cruel and authoritarian colonial rule for nearly a century, and this in part laid the foundation for dictatorial rule in the immediate aftermath. Subsequently, authoritarian leaders dominated Africa's postcolonial political order for the first thirty years of independence. They directed state operations to maintain their hold on power and in the process subverted the dream of freedom. Because of the predominance of this type of political leadership on the continent, many scholars and practitioners have assumed that postcolonial Africa lacked democratic culture and governance experience that was worthy of emulation. This assumption led them to prefer importation of governance models and practices from outside the continent. This book provides a unique African fable of democratic leadership and practice during the first two decades of African independence that remains untold. This story is worthy to tell for two reasons: (1) the systematic democratic practice of Somali leaders was like no other on the continent during those decades and therefore provides political and scholarly insights into the ways we think about African leadership and democracy, and (2) it demonstrates a political reality in Somalia that contrasts with today's Somalia, an experience that could have significant bearing on the future of that country given the political catastrophe of the last three decades.

Somali leaders confronted challenges from two quarters: factions of the political elite who considered the postcolonial state apparatus as their vehicle for rent seeking and perpetuating their reign. The other test came from cold warriors who were not interested in accountable African governments but who instead

favored local allies that served their respective interests rather than those of African people.[4] The tussle between the democrats and the sectarian political camps, in the context of the Cold War, is a vital African story that has not been told before and that has valuable lessons for others. This book tells the story of Africa's first democrats.

Debating African Leadership

Nearly sixty years after independence the promise of Africa's liberation, for the most part, is stuck in the quicksands of dictatorial leaders, dysfunctional administrative systems, and a cold-blooded international order.[5] Much of the literature on African leadership is deeply invested in the diagnosis of authoritarian leaders but pays scant attention to democratic alternatives whose experiences could provide positive guides for those dreaming and struggling for a fully democratic Africa. Successful local projects, rather than imported ones, are most relevant in incubating development and democracy in Africa and elsewhere in the Third World.[6]

Over the last quarter century much energy has been devoted to the nature of the African political crisis and the need for democratic governments.[7] I posit that the place to advance this discussion is the examination of the nature and the role of the state[8] and leadership.[9] Broadly defined, the state encompasses four key pillars: leader, regime, administrative apparatus, and collective consciousness. My argument is that collective belonging in the form of citizenship is at the heart of state making and the most precarious and difficult to create; nonetheless, leadership is the piston that can transform a nation's potential into real progress.[10] Indeed, such might be more so the case in a transitional context, when revival of a civic spirit and national mobilization are a sine qua non for renewal. In transitions such as from colonialism to independence, in which the national question,[11] the nature of the postcolonial development,[12] and the structure and the role of government have to be oriented, I suggest that political leadership is where central history making is most critical.[13]

Two groups of scholars have dealt with African leadership since the early 1980s, but neither of them focused on democratic leaders and the state in a detailed and methodical manner.[14] The most systematic scholarly treatment of postcolonial African leadership is the book by Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg titled *Personal Rule in Black Africa*. It provides a fine blend of theoretical concepts and much empirical flesh. In this seminal study, Jackson and Rosberg identify four types of postcolonial African leaders who have dominated the continent's political landscape: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, and Tyrant.[15] The four types of leaders described in the book are differentiated by the degree to which each dominates the state and by the nature of their relations to other members of the elite and society. Some "personal rulers," who ignore laws in favor of their personal and

political needs, turn the state into their private preserve, while others command it in order to realize national ambitions such as development. Style difference among personal rulers notwithstanding, all of the four leadership types permit minimal democratic inputs from the societies they rule. Accordingly, Tyrants are the most brutal and least democratic, while political Prophets are driven by ambitious goals they have for their societies. The latter think that their agenda can be achieved only if they tightly direct it. The Prince and the Autocrat fit somewhere in the middle of this leadership spectrum.

Tyrants rule ruthlessly and without regard for any public norms. Jackson and Rosberg underscore the fundamental qualities of African tyrannical rulers:

> Tyrants have ruled without any pretense to legitimacy or authority, and tyranny is therefore conceived as fundamentally illegitimate and unjust government in violation of any norms or rules or understandings. . . . [I]t is a mistake to consider that Tyrants enjoy "privileges" or exercise "responsibilities" or that subjects enjoy "rights" or exercise "obligation."[16]

Among the tyrants identified by Jackson and Rosberg were Uganda's Idi Amin, Jean-Bedel Bokassa of Central African Republic, and Francisco Macias Nguema of Equatorial Guinea.

While tyrants occupy the extreme end of the political spectrum, autocrats are not far behind in terms of their control of the state and society. Although the Autocrat is slightly more mindful of his political obligation than a Tyrant, nevertheless he has tight rein over his political associates. Accordingly,

> the African Autocrat dominates the state to a greater extent than the African Prince. Lieutenants remain far more dependent on him and are prevented by him from acquiring an independent power base. It is only a slight exaggeration to suggest that the "state" under autocracy of the African type is more the ruler's private domain than the public realm; he conducts himself and is treated like the proprietor of the state.[17]

Jackson and Rosberg name Felix Houphouet-Boigny (Ivory Coast), Kamuzu Banda (Malawi), Ahmed Ahidjo (Cameroon), and Omar Bongo (Gabon) as major African Autocrats.

Less brutal and dominating than the Autocrat is the African political Prince. Unlike the Tyrant and the Autocrat, the Prince rules through private agreement with elements of the elite. Political Princes have

> royalist characteristics akin to those of a traditional monarchy, where the ruler is the personification of the state and the custodian of its political values and practices. But the new African Prince is obliged to conduct the affairs of state without the supporting normative framework of a political tradition. . . . [T]he legitimacy of the modern African Prince depends upon his respect for

> the *private* understandings and agreements he has made with other members of the oligarchy over whom he presides and with whom he rules. It is not only their power he respects, but also his informal contracts with them.[18]

Among the African Princes noted are Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Leopold Senghor (Senegal), William Tubman and William Tolbert (Liberia), and Haile Selassie (Ethiopia).[19] Despite important variation between the governance style of these powerful men and the private arrangements they had with other key members of the elite, all amassed state power in their offices and marginalized whatever constitutional process that existed in their countries.

The final nondemocratic African leader is the political Prophet. A political Prophet is distinguished from other personal rulers by remaining in power not being his final preoccupation.[20] Instead prophets hang on to power to chase the promised land for their societies:

> Prophetic leadership does not function through adjudication and political compromise, as does princely rule, nor through control and management, as does autocratic rule. Neither has it the amoral characteristics of pure power-hunger distinctive of tyranny. Quite the opposite: it is founded on morality, but the morality of ultimate ends. . . . It is autocracy with a mission. The leader himself must be a moral exemplar: an inspiration to his disciples and followers and yet a severely demanding taskmaster.[21]

According to Jackson and Rosberg, African political Prophets are few, and the most prominent were Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana[22] and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.

Personal Rule in Black Africa has made pioneering contributions to the way we study African leadership. However, the scope of Jackson and Rosberg's book is limited to the study of only one type of leadership, "personal rule." Alternative forms of political leadership existed in Africa during the period under review, even in places like Botswana, but they did not attract the attention of scholars.[23]

Unlike *Personal Rule in Black Africa*, the limited scholarly works that have focused on Africa's new leaders in the 1990s offered little in the way of sustained theoretical exploration or significant historically grounded empirical evidence that speaks to democratic leadership on the continent. The most significant contribution to this line of thinking is Marina Ottaway's book on the new leadership of Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Rwanda. Ottaway's thesis is that the Ugandan, Ethiopian, Rwandan, and Eritrean leaders have received much credit for reconstructing war-devastated economies. However, she categorically declares, these leaders could not be cajoled by the international community to transition to democratic rule.[24] Political developments in the region have confirmed the prognosis of the book despite the efforts of some of these regimes to stage fraudulent elections that have consistently reconfirmed their total hold on power.[25] Thus,

Ottaway's new leaders of Africa by and large fit into one of the four leadership types Jackson and Rosberg identify.

The contributions of Jackson and Rosberg as well as Ottaway demonstrate that Africa's personal rulers shaped the orientation and structures of the state to different degrees such that the states functioned in ways that significantly reflected the rulers' imprint. More particularly, *Personal Rule in Black Africa* has much explanatory merit as evidenced by the poor quality of leadership accelerated by unvarnished personal and militaristic dictatorship, which has directly contributed to the demise of civic life and autonomous public institutions in several parts of the continent. Further, the present interregnum in Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Libya,[26] Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and elsewhere where dictatorship is the norm, as in Algeria, Ethiopia, and Egypt, registers either a recycling of spent yet still ambitious failures or throws up relative newcomers hungry for power but Lilliputian in the attributes that count: legitimacy, accountability, competence, integrity, and promise. If postcolonial times in Africa have been hostage to these categories of aspirants, have there been African leaders who have valued legitimacy, good governance, ethical behavior, and most certainly the will to leave office when their tenure ended? I suggest Somali leaders in the 1960s offered a different model of leader.[27]

Theoretically speaking, the antithesis of the personal ruler is the democratic statesperson. By definition, a statesperson is distinguishable from ordinary politicians, personal rulers or otherwise. The politician, though capable of occasional acts of collective value, is primarily energized by myopic self-interest, at times instrumentally linked to the promotion of a sectarian group interest, and in the end, satisfied and even exhausted by playing the game of fortune to collect the personal spoils it delivers to the victors. While politicians could possibly repent and transmute themselves, statespeople define themselves as quintessentially trustees. More concretely, there are, among others, four additional organic characteristics that separate the latter from the former. First, a statesperson is characteristically self-confident. This trait is different from concentrated egocentricity in that it is a fusion of healthy but rigorous self-minding to improve one's life chances and an early awareness of civic obligations. Moving into large arenas, preoccupation with inclusive well-being begins to dominate priorities. Second, a statesperson exudes a strong moral code. While there are, probably, precognitive sentiments of goodwill to others that are the bequest of primary socializing agents such as the family and school, the potential statesperson sculpts a personal identity by cultivating a deep sense of righteousness. Here, necessary properties include wakefulness, probity and duty, respect for the rights of others, overall emotional intelligence, and a strict adherence to the constitution of the land. Third, a statesperson has a vision of where the nation must go and how it can get there. The rudiments of an appealing, if not moving, conception of the

task at hand requires a cluster of abilities. These include an evolving knowledge of the relevant past, thoughtful engagement with the perplexities of the age, an eye for the possible future or a workable utopia that identifies hope within the hard contradictions worth striving for, and a modicum of public eloquence to inspire others to embrace the vision. Finally, a statesperson need not be a micromanager. Rather, leadership of this kind requires a supervising attention that recruits deliberative competence, efficiency, and technical expertise. Furthermore, a normalization of such criteria for appointment and appropriate promotion, together with the example set by the leader, would motivate personnel to take ownership of their responsibilities. In turn, this Weberian administrative rationality boosts the currency of the leader, too. Together, they deepen the legitimacy of the state, which bodes well for the building of effective national authority and institutions.

Thus, a statesperson is the individual who, in any given situation, and minimally, is first among equals. He or she gives an immediate human definition to the abstraction. While the most fleeting of dimensions of the state, a leader can, nonetheless, make a positive difference in his or her time, leaving behind a legacy of competence, constitutionalism, and order that conditions the conduct of political life. At the extreme converse, a leader can preside over ineptness, corruption, and chaos such that the deficit undermines any constructive effort by others and, thus, kills hope.

Jackson and Rosberg note the ways personal rulers dominate the state apparatus. By contrast, the balance of power between the democratic statesperson and other organs of the state is qualitatively different. Here the statesperson's authority is constitutionally limited, and other organs of the state have greater autonomy, which the political leader honors and respects even when he or she greatly disagrees with them. The Jackson-Rosberg typology of leaders in contemporary Africa associated each type of authority with a particular style of governance, although all forms of personal rule dwarfed other organs of the state. By contrast, under a democratic authority other state agents outside the presidency play a more significant role in governance and therefore have a life of their own. Thus, although I find Jackson and Rosberg's work exceptionally useful, I add that leadership in Africa was and is not just "personal."

Under the leadership of a statesperson a thousand flowers bloom. When someone is at the helm, others, occupying the highest positions of authority, immediately follow. A constellation of individuals and their portfolios make up a regime. To be sure, even under the most favorable circumstances, both a leader and his or her team are neither Olympian nor saintly. On the contrary, individually as well as collectively, they are naturally keyed to their own interests and those of the entities they represent. Nonetheless, if a regime is to attain a modicum of acceptance and legitimacy by the larger society, self- or factional utility would have to be tamed by a combination of inclusive aspiration, a capacious consciousness

of imminent needs, ethical and legal conduct, and effective management. Thus, members of a successful regime are, in the words of one keen observer, "the custodians of a nation's ideals, of the beliefs it cherishes, of its permanent hopes, of the faith which makes a nation out of a mere aggregate of individuals."[28] Moreover, leadership or regime cannot limit itself solely to the role of the keeper of tradition and noble ambition; rather, progress depends, particularly in transitional times, on the intellect to discern and the courage to articulate hidden matters, and even matters unutterable yet of immense consequences, that others cannot contemplate. Under such leadership fortuna is tamed and the apparatus of the state hums with optimism and energy.

The administrative frame upholds the infrastructure of the state. Here are located the more enduring institutions that carry out the day-to-day assignments as well as preserve the procedures, habits, and documents that give rhythm, predictability, and universality to the operations of the state. Even the most restrained leadership, beyond its strictly constitutional mandate to oversee, appoint, or dismiss, can take advantage of those gray areas or exceptional situations in which authority or prerogative is unclear. However, such a moment also presents a good test case for a regime's self-monitoring and the autonomy of the relevant institutions. Accordingly, the greater the compliance with basic rules and recognition of the rational intelligence of the apparatus of the state, the larger the dividends for both the regime's image and the viability of political institutions and order. In contradistinction, the more the operational organs are tied to the whims of the regime interest or the leader, the greater the evaporation of legitimacy for all the frames. This is the ultimate cost of personal rule, corruption, and incompetence.

The final element of the state is the most complex yet fundamental: civic belonging. More than anything else, what defines this frame is a deprivatized association and robust spirit of public belonging that is not easily derailed by contingent and narrow impulses. To create an identity large enough to accommodate kinship with others beyond filial or religious affiliation is to transmute the self into citizenship. For, if the exclusiveness of affinity is tantamount to concentrated anxieties and liable to trigger entropic attitudes, citizenship demands an extension of selfhood as a part of a working "imagined community."[29] Here, then, particularity meets universality. Leadership and regime formation in one sense is testimony to a major and inescapable alienation that comes with the momentary victory of one group. Commonwealth, by contrast, has a strong countervailing tendency: it absorbs the divisive fallout from competitive politics as it reinvigorates civic life. The ultimate result is the return of the state to society ownership, a source of competence and an architect of common destiny. Collective political belonging is not an act of nature but the calculated product of leadership and the state.

I argue that Africa's first democrats offered the type of leadership that can best be characterized as that of democratic statespeople. They practiced such leadership by respecting the spirit and word of the democratic constitution and the divisions of power embedded in it, and they partially succeeded in transforming the colonial public apparatus into an accountable administration. Unlike the quality of leadership detailed in *Personal Rule in Black Africa*, these leaders tamed their personal temptations. Both President Aden Abdulle Osman and Prime Minister Abdirazak H. Hussen exuded some of the inspirational qualities attributed to political Prophets, but the evidence clearly shows that they were mindful of the soft underbelly of being a political Prophet or worse. For example, Osman observed the downside of Nkrumah's prophetic leadership during Osman's state visit to Ghana in October 1961:

> Our last day in Accra! At 9:00 we went to visit the headquarters of the Convention People's Party. This party, whose Secretary General is Nkrumah despite being also the head of state, has tentacles everywhere in the life of the country. Since the party is seated in huge buildings in every district of the 9 regions of Ghana, I asked where the party gets its funds to finance such big buildings and its activities. I was told "from the people." I imagine the government takes the party's share from the money it collects from the people in the form of taxes. So the party is financed also by the nonmember citizens of the CPP. Poor democracy! We blabber about it only when we struggle to conquer political power in order to get rid of colonialism.[30]

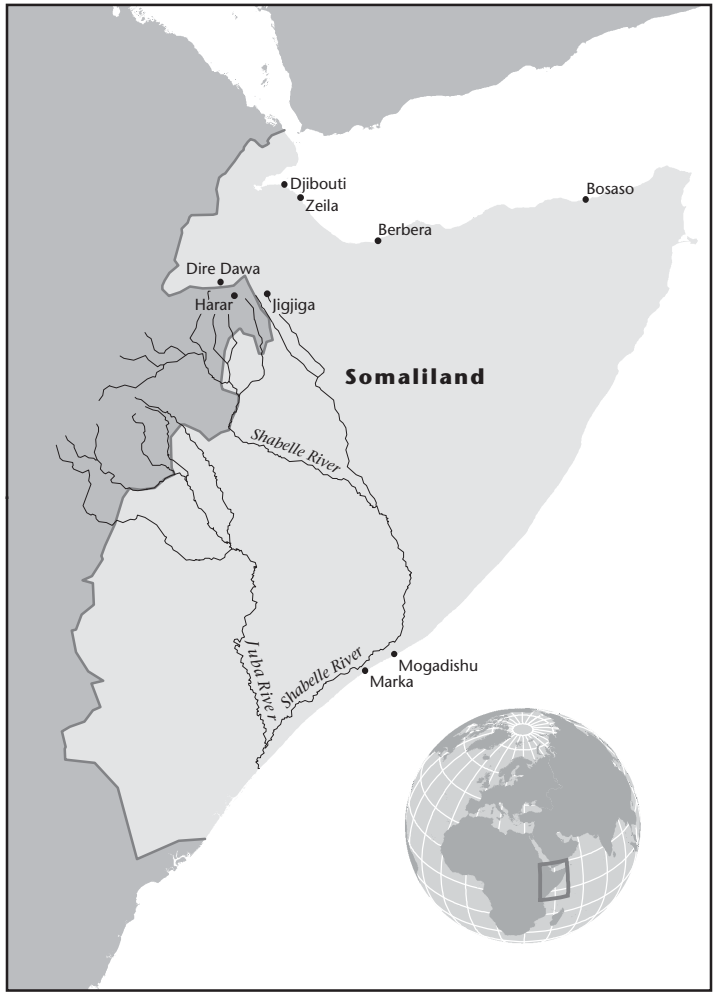
He not only recognized the misuse of public money by Nkrumah's ruling party but was also troubled by the efforts of Nkrumah's team to create a personality cult. Osman remarked in his diary that such concentration and misuse of power was partly responsible for the attempts made to kill this pioneering African leader. Much like African political Prophets, Osman and Hussen had strong moral ideals and desired to see their nation overcome underdevelopment, but they did not see themselves as the only two men destined to deliver the nation's hopes. Osman and Hussen's desire for political power was secondary to the transformational agenda they sought. However, they made no effort to change the democratic rules of the game to prolong their tenure. These Somali leaders, unlike other political Prophets, like Nyerere and Nkrumah, were committed to a clear constitutional division of labor among parliament, the judiciary, and the executive. President Osman, who had the authority to appoint the prime minister, recognized and respected the constitutional role of an executive prime minister and his own limited responsibility as head of state. Finally, because of the two leaders' attitudes toward the constitution and its clearly marked divisions of responsibilities, they pursued building the professional autonomy of public service. Retrospectively, given these leaders' aspiration to institutionalize state operations, their willingness to respect the will of the people and accept political

defeat through a democratic process set them apart from others, and thus they are Africa's pioneering democratic statespeople.[31] Thus, I contend that the Somali experience provides a qualitatively unique type of leadership that went beyond those mapped out in *Personal Rule in Black Africa* or in the 1990s literature on Africa's new leaders.[32] I hasten to add that the personal factor in leaders is vital but in a way that was not foreseen by earlier scholars. I argue that an individual's experiences early in life as well as during formative political years have a significant impact on the quality and orientation of that person's leadership, as the Somali case illustrates.

The Somali Case

Somalis, culturally the most homogeneous nation on the continent, fell prey to colonial machinations during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The land and the people were partitioned into five domains under three European and one African colonial power.[33] Two of these colonies, British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland became the Somali Republic on July 1, 1960. In trying to create a nation-state out of people who were culturally homogeneous,[34] the Somali Republic faced tremendous challenges from the underdevelopment it inherited from the two colonial powers. The new republic had to overcome the different legal, language, and other official practices prevalent in the two former colonies. Further, both British and Italian authorities had used genealogical division among the population as key pillars in organizing public affairs and communal relations, which had the political effect of segregating people into exclusive cultural-political camps;[35] and the new state had to work assiduously to undo this legacy by attempting to create common citizenship.[36] Finally, the extensive work necessary to create a nation-state out of people required reorienting public service to gain administrative capacity to manage the affairs of the country and develop a political order that was accountable to the population. To do all of this required political leaders who had the commitment and the audacity to take on the difficulties without being preoccupied with prolonging their tenure in power. Osman and Hussen emerged as the two leaders of the dominant nationalist party, the Somali Youth League (SYL), whose integrity and capacity were tested in taking on the Somali challenge.

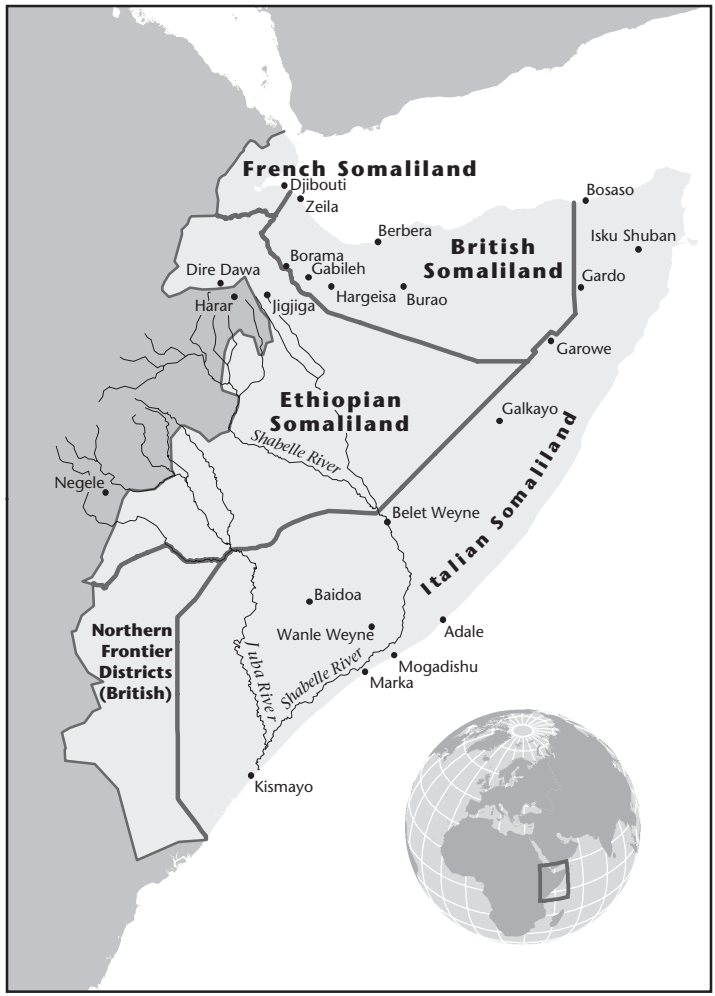
The narrative of this book weaves the political struggles of the Somali people in the republic through the work of the two men and their visions, achievements, and failures in a world dominated by the Cold War and in the context of liberation and postcolonial nationalist politics. Chapters 2 and 3 present the precarious early lives of Osman and Hussen and their determined effort to survive. The chapters offer a brief look into the formation of Osman's and Hussen's personal characters and their individual and political orientation. Much of the literature on African leaders does not pay much attention to such early experience, which



Somalilands before colonial rule

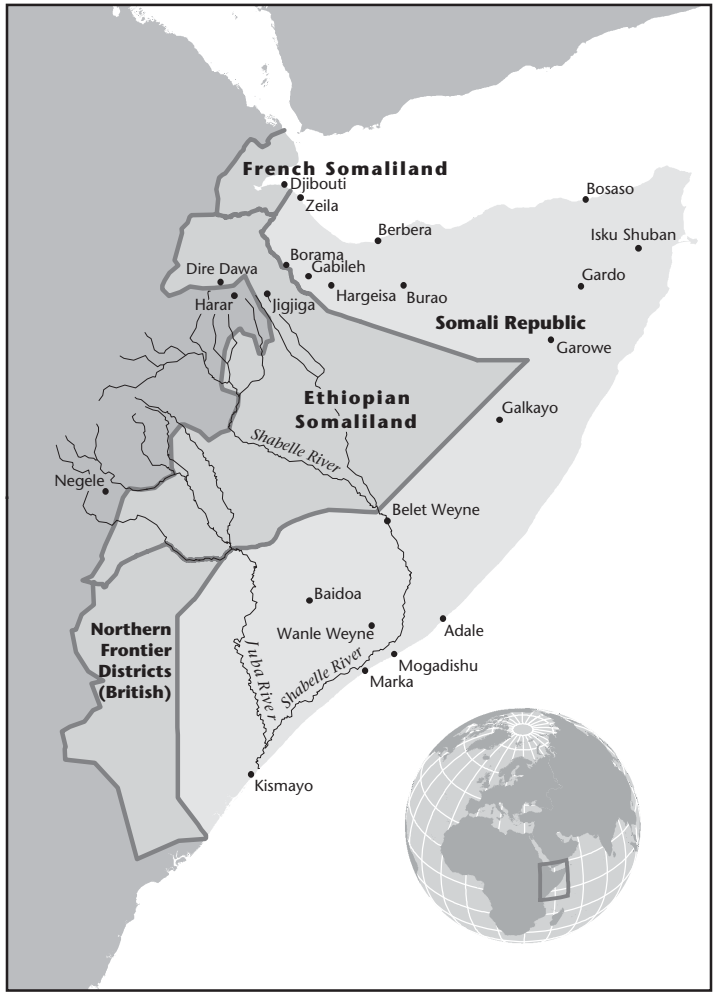
I think is vital to understanding how individuals later conduct themselves in public arenas.

Chapter 4 discusses the rise of Somalia's leading nationalist party, the SYL, and how the interest and the wishes of the Somalis were sacrificed at the altar of Cold War politics by restoring Italy as a trusteeship authority despite fascist Italy having committed colonial crimes against Somalis before it was defeated in World War II.[37] The account presents SYL motives and strategy to outflank Italy in its return as the trusteeship administration and its agenda to prolong its



Somalilands under colonial rule

colonial tenure. One sees Aden Abdulle Osman's steady hand in the institutionalization of the party and the operations of the National Assembly while demonstrating his commitment to independence and democratic governance. Evident from this history is Osman's political courage and self-conscious restraint, his dedication to the cause of the country and his willingness to walk away from political power. By contrast, Hussen played a relatively less significant role in this period because of his youth, but he rose through party ranks to become its president in 1956 when Osman was elected Speaker of the National Assembly.



Somali Republic

During this formative political decade Osman and Hussen came to share some basic values about democracy and governance despite having different political temperaments. Finally, the chapter lays bare the march to unification of British and Italian Somalilands.

Chapter 5 narrates the political efforts made by leading Somalis to anchor the new nation in a democratic foundation. This was a tumultuous period in which the British and Italian colonial systems had to be melded into a single public service system. In addition, the political leaders of the two former colonies,

despite contrasting leadership and political experiences, had to forge a united national agenda to give practical expression to the passionate sentiments of the Somali people for independence and unification. However, despite their commitment to liberation and unification, the usual teething problems arose during the first four years of independence, what I call the first republic, 1960–1964.

Chapter 6 covers the struggle for an institutionalized democracy during the second republic, 1964–1967, and the highest point it reached in the modern history of the country. It is evident from Osman's diaries and from other public sources of information that members of the cabinet of the first republic were not fulfilling their duties and that the country needed a radical shift. After three challenging years, President Osman came to the difficult decision that the country needed a fresh start in leadership. Mindful of the challenges facing the republic, Osman appointed a new prime minister who he confidently thought had the will to shake things up and set the country in a new direction. This chapter provides an account of the depth of the political tussle between these democratic and reform-minded leaders and their supporters, and those who were invested in sectarian and postcolonial patronage politics. Osman faced a daunting challenge as his first term came to a close. He had never campaigned for election for the three political posts he had held since 1953: president of the SYL, Speaker of the legislative assembly, and president.[38] This discussion demonstrates beyond any shadow of a doubt the democratic essence of republican rule that distinguished Somalia from other African countries during this period.

Chapter 7 looks at the political life of the republic after Somalia's democratic champions peacefully left office upon defeat in the 1967 presidential election. Osman watched the new leadership from his perch in parliament, while Hussen fought the creeping authoritarian order in parliament before the military staged what appeared to be a popular coup.

Chapter 8 provides a summary of the moral of *Africa's First Democrats* for the country and the continent. The chapter concludes the study by sifting through the conceptual and historical contributions of the Somali experience to the study of democratic leadership in postcolonial Africa and Somalia.

2 Aden A. Osman

From Orphan to Nationalist Leader

The Africanist literature on African leadership in the immediate postindependence period paid little attention to the early life experience of African liberation leaders and how this defined their leadership qualities after independence. Knowing those early experiences throws much light on the political courses individuals pursued, how they conducted themselves as heads of liberation movements, and their times as presidents and premiers after independence. Without knowing their backgrounds one is left to guess the circumstances that shaped the character of the leader. This chapter and chapter 3 fill this lacuna in the Africanist literature by narrating Osman's and Hussen's early life experiences and identifying certain qualities they developed that influenced their political identity as well as their leadership. Osman's experiences before he entered politics can be divided into four phases: as a destitute orphan, as a restless laborer, as a nurse and clerical worker in the fascist administration, and as a businessman. He developed five personal traits during this formative period: self-reliance, dogged determination, empathy for others, independence, and conciliatory approach to life.[1]

Childhood

Osman's early life entailed a difficult struggle to survive in an impoverished environment. Parentless, he had to learn to fend for himself through odd jobs as he tried to educate himself any way possible. His childhood came to an end when he made his way to the colonial capital, Mogadishu.

Osman was born in a rural settlement called Ceel Qurun near Belet Weyne in the Hiran region in 1908 or 1909. He was the only child of Abdulle Osman and Awrala Yusuf Dulaad. Osman's parents divorced a few months after his birth, and his paternal grandmother, Hawa Herow, nursed and took care of him until she went blind four years later. Meanwhile, Abdulle Osman left for Taleeh and joined Sayyid Mohamed Abdille Hassan's nationalist struggle against the British in Northern Somalia.[2] Osman's father returned to Hiran after one of the sayyid's setbacks. The destitute father and son took a difficult journey and migrated

farther south. Abdulle Osman worked as a livestock herder for other families in the region. One day a lion attacked him while he was tending the flock and mangled one of his legs, crippling him so that he could not now fulfill his herding duties. The family that he worked for continued to support him and his son. When the family moved to a new grazing area, the crippled man was left alone in the old settlement. But the family continued to supply him with milk, which the young boy delivered to his father, making these milk delivery trips several times before his father finally recovered and rejoined the family. The kindness of this unrelated family left an indelible mark on the younger Osman's memory. Osman hoped to meet and thank someone from that family when he grew up, but that wish never materialized. When Abdulle was able to walk, the father and son walked for several days to Hudur, a village with stone and wood houses and traditional pastoral huts (*ariish*). Two novelties in Hudur enchanted the boy: stone houses and individuals of a different skin hue dressed in strange-looking attire (Arabs). He also met a few Somalis from Hamar who spoke an unfamiliar dialect.[3] Among them was a merchant named Mursal Humooy at whose house Osman briefly stayed.[4] Thereafter, Osman worked as a cattle and goat herder for another family, who were equally kind. Their son, Hussein Yaabarag, was about the same age and also tended the stock.[5]

Osman's extended family also relocated from Hiran to Baidoa's vicinity. Habeeb Osman, Osman's paternal uncle, came to Hudur in 1921 with a camel to transport his disabled brother to Baidoa. Baidoa was the biggest population center Osman had seen, and there he saw for the first time an Italian colonial officer, Cavalli, who was the resident commissioner of Baidoa. Another Italian Osman saw in town was the explorer Ugo Ferrandi.[6] During this period the people of the region dubbed the few Italians in the area "sharifs," to underscore their generosity. On every Friday, the resident commissioner distributed alms to the indigent.[7]

The poverty of Osman's family compelled him to do menial tasks in the military barracks,[8] where the soldiers were mainly Arab mercenaries the Italians had recruited from Yemen. Osman and other young boys made tea and coffee and supplied the soldiers with water drawn from nearby Baidoa spring. Abdulle Osman established a Quranic school to support himself, but father and son lived separately. Osman later worked as a dishwasher and waiter in restaurants and teashops. Being a waiter in these establishments meant working very long hours in unhygienic conditions. As a result he developed scabies, but fortunately he was successfully treated.

Shortly thereafter Lieutenant Stiffan, an Italian officer, and his Somali woman, Faduma Hussein, employed Osman as a houseboy in 1921. Stiffan moved to Mogadishu, and his mistress and Osman followed him on foot. Faduma treated Osman as if he were her son. She later arranged for his circumcision. Stiffan went back to Italy when his term of duty expired, and Faduma and Osman returned to Baidoa.

After a short stay in Baidoa, Faduma decided to resettle in Bardera, and Osman was left alone.

An Italian public school was established in Baidoa while Osman was there, and he enrolled in it on his own initiative. This was Osman's first opportunity to attend school. The resident commissioner's accountant, Giuseppe Tusso, was the school's only teacher, and the school had an irregular schedule. Tusso noticed Osman's aptitude and enthusiasm for his studies because the young boy asked him many questions. Despite his satisfactory performance in class Osman could not afford to stay in school as he had to earn his keep. He reported this circumstance to the teacher, who was moved by Osman's plight. Tusso instructed his domestic worker, Abukar Haylow, that the young boy would assist him in his duties and go to school at the same time.[9] Tusso had a leopard and assigned Osman the task of purchasing meat from the market for the beast every morning. Osman was given an allowance, a rare gesture of kindness, for himself, which he used to buy a snack in the teashops.[10]

Tusso was kind to Osman but not to others. One day Osman accidentally dropped a dozen plates on the floor as he helped set the dinner table for Tusso and three of his friends. Abukar and Tusso's Ethiopian cook did not scold the boy, but Osman feared the worst from the boss. To Osman's amazement, Tusso did not even reprimand him. In contrast, the accountant was not as kind to his cook. Early in 1923 Tusso thrashed the cook and chased him into the resident commissioner's house. Tusso struck the cook in the presence of the commissioner and his wife. For this offense, the accountant was sent back to Mogadishu, and Osman went with his benefactor. During the trip Tusso rode a mule while Osman alternately walked and rode Tusso's white horse. The accountant's leopard was mounted in its cage on a camel's back during the first leg of the journey, but when the caravan camped overnight, it vanished into the bush.

Finally, the caravan reached Mogadishu. There Osman met Haji Farah Ali Omer, an interpreter for the Italians.[11] Tusso increased the boy's daily allowance to one and a half rupias for helping with house chores. After some months in Mogadishu, Osman left Tusso's service because he was being wrongly admonished for losing photographs of partially naked women that belonged to Tusso. Another Italian, Lieutenant Rossi from Naples, immediately employed Osman. Rossi had a mistress, Hawa Abdi Sidow. The lieutenant went to Jowhar with troops to subdue the rebel Sheikh Hussein Barsane.[12] Rossi was a possessive man and locked Hawa and Osman in the house during his absence. He bought what supplies the two captives needed in advance, but meat and milk were supplied from a window basket tied to a rope. Hawa and Osman were imprisoned in the house for several days. When Rossi returned from the field he had lost his house key, and Osman had to descend from the roof via a sisal rope to open the gate. The rough rope left blisters on Osman's palms.

When Rossi's tour of duty came to an end and he went back to Italy, Hawa and Osman met another Italian officer and went with him to Doon Dheere, near Janale, where he commanded a company of native soldiers. The Janale region was to become a major site of settler colonization in Somalia, which displaced large numbers of local farmers from their land. The askaris were there to suffocate Somali resistance to the colonial labor regime and prevent the uprising of the dislocated. Osman left this house, as there was little work for him. Subsequently, he worked for some Genoese settlers in the new plantations near the village of Kaytooy plantations. While engaged here, in 1924, Osman received news that his father had passed away in Baidoa. Assuming the burial had taken place some weeks earlier, he did not return to Baidoa but instead organized a reading of the Quran.

During the following two years, Osman worked as a "boy" at several plantations in the Janale district. He wanted to start studying again, but there was no opportunity. Osman could not afford paper and so occasionally scribbled on walls to practice writing. One day the plantation owner caught him writing his name on a wall and screamed profanities. The insult simply reinforced his wish to become literate.

As a teenager, Osman keenly felt for the Somali plantation workers and the humiliation they faced under Italian rule. He and one of his Somali friends quit working on a plantation as a result of a conflict they had with white workers and their unfairness. The employer accused the two Somalis of stealing money, claiming that their salaries could not support the boys' standard of living. The police rounded up the two in Merka without investigating the employer's accusation. The white man's justice was such that the two boys were kept in prison for fifteen days without trial. When the resident commissioner, De Rege, saw them, Osman vigorously contested the accusation. The officer slapped Osman for being too talkative in his self-defense and for challenging colonial superiority. The accepted norm among the Italians was that any one of them could attack the perpetrator of such a "crime."[13]

For several months Osman ran errands for noncommissioned officers of the navy before beginning work as a waiter in a restaurant owned by an Italian family, named Cecchi, in Afgoi in 1926. The family had eight children. Osman hated customers who came very late for dinner and prolonged his working day. Nevertheless, he enjoyed playing with the family's children because he could practice his spoken Italian. Osman recognized that racial prejudices were confined to adults, as his playmates took no account of racial differences. He sporadically attended school when his restaurant responsibilities allowed. This quasi-happy time did not last too long because his employers did not like the friendship between the Somali boy and their children. He was accused of having a relationship with the Cecchis' fifteen-year-old daughter Alfa. According to Osman there

was no relation between the two. The Italians considered a relationship between a native man and an Italian woman a serious scandal and felt that they had to defend the purity of their race, ignoring the relationships some Italian men had with Somali women. Consequently, they asked the authorities to expel the waiter from town.

The Italian police commander in Afgoi, Brigadier Ziccardi, gave Osman a sealed envelope and instructed him to deliver the letter to the police commander at Wanle Weyne and to never return to Afgoi. Suspicious of its contents, Osman opened the letter and discovered that the police authority in Wanle Weyne was instructed to keep the young man in that town or send him even farther away. Osman delivered the letter and was ordered not to return to Afgoi, but he was allowed to proceed to Baidao.

Father Gustavo Montanari, a missionary from Turin, employed Osman as a helper and cook in Baidoa, although he knew that the young man had never worked as a chef. Father Montanari and Osman often discussed religious matters, and Osman criticized the priest's faith despite being ignorant about it. Osman left the service of the priest and joined the workforce of the resident commissioner, Domenico Anda. While he was employed as a servant with the commissioner, in March 1928, Crown Prince Umberto visited the town, and Osman presented him with a bouquet of flowers while the prince and Governor Cesare Maria De Vecchi stood in their car. Shortly thereafter, the resident commissioner was transferred to Marka, and Osman went with him.

Coming of Age

Osman began to realize the dead-end nature of the odd jobs he had held and consequently decided to try his luck in Mogadishu. Mogadishu gave him his first real chance to attend school. The Italian administration had recently established a program to train Somali nurses. He was at first rejected as too young because of his small frame. Osman finally enrolled in the course for nurse apprentices at the approximate age of nineteen. After five months of study, the twenty recruits took their first examination, and Osman had the best grade in his cohort. He was immediately appointed as an assistant nurse with a salary of 258 Italian lire. The colonial administration considered nurses as part of the military, although they were unarmed, and supplied them with uniforms. Osman was appointed to work in the ward for whites of the Giacomo De Martini Hospital. The principal doctor in the hospital was Ferruccio Cotta Ramusino, who was also in charge of the training course. This doctor was very kind to the nurse trainees, and Osman liked him a great deal. Osman worked the night shift. The ward was not usually busy at night, and the Somali nurses could often sleep during the lull hours. Martini Hospital was located near the Indian Ocean coast and its strong salty winds.

During his early days at Martini, Osman developed hay fever, which became bronchial asthma. This allergy tormented him for the next twenty-six years.

Osman's determination to continue his education did not end with the nursing program. A year later, he registered as a third grader in an adult elementary school and continued to work as a nurse while attending classes in the evenings. He completed the adult program and earned a certificate that showed exceptional merit. Osman desired to continue his education but was unable to do so since colonial authorities limited native education to five years. Osman implored the nuns and the priests who ran the school to allow him to continue his studies, but they told him that further schooling for his kind was not possible. Restrictions on education ensured the production of servile Somalis. To add insult to injury, the authorities promulgated a new law that stipulated that natives must salute, in the style of the ancient Romans, any Italian they came across. The police publicly flogged any Somali who failed to perform such a humiliating act.

While Osman was engaged in educational and professional self-advancement, his maternal uncle, Mohamed Aw Yusuf, was plotting a different road map for him. The uncle came to Mogadishu and insisted that his nephew had come of age and should establish a family. He proposed Madina Hassan Hooshow as the bride. The young nurse consented and consummated the marriage in 1931. However, the union lasted only two years.

Osman diligently worked as a nurse to improve his skills and enhance his status. He was promoted to second class in 1931. His superiors recognized his dedication and talent and appointed him head of personnel at Martini Hospital. During his brief tenure as head of personnel, Osman learned typing and bookkeeping. Two years later, the authorities offered him a promotion to first-class nurse or a transfer to clerical services. Osman enjoyed being a nurse, but he knew that salaries in the clerical services were higher. He chose the clerical position and was subsequently transferred to Shalambot, near Janale.

Before Osman took the clerical post he spoke on several occasions with Doctor Bacchelli, director of Mogadishu's health department, about the possibility of improving working conditions for the nursing staff or allowing them to go into private practice. Apparently Osman's persistent lobbying for Somali nurses irritated the director. His transfer to the clerical services was evidently a ploy to get rid of him lest he influence other nurses.

Under Fascism

With the rise of fascism the colony was transformed into a more brutal and racist arena. Osman made significant professional progress and was able to broaden his horizon through intensive reading of literature. During his tenure in Mogadishu and the Lower Shabelle region (the region that had the largest number of

Italian settlers), Osman's presence in the fascist agricultural settlement brought him face to face with the inhuman nature of that order and its system of injustice. He hid his outrage to ensure his survival and continued to develop his skills. His experience during this period left a lasting imprint on him regarding tyrannical rule.

The area around Janale and Shalambot was the heart of the Italian settler economy. Osman's new employment as a clerical worker let him see how the colonial economy and administration worked against Somalis. Haji Farah was the senior Somali interpreter-typist at Shalambot, and Osman became his deputy. Francesco Cossu, who was the resident commissioner, had a reputation for being intelligent and wicked. The commissioner was also known for his appetite for humiliating natives. Cossu always acted as if the Italians were right irrespective of how wrongly and unjustly they treated Somalis. The commissioner never mistreated Osman; however, he did not miss any opportunity to impress on his deputy clerk which was the superior race. Osman had the misfortune to intimately witness Cossu's brutality to Somalis. In one incident, Cossu sent Warsame Cumar Siyaad, a clerk at the office of an Italian businessman, to prison for five days. Warsame's employer accused him of molesting and harassing a friend's wife. The commissioner believed the businessman without making any inquiry. Warsame disputed the claim, but the accuser was not asked to produce evidence. Instead, the commissioner sentenced Warsame to prison for five days for daring to call the white man a liar. Osman, who was the interpreter for Cusso, heard him announce that the five days would teach Warsame how to behave as a "native." Osman begged the commissioner to pardon Warsame but to no avail.

The injustice meted out to Warsame paled in comparison with the brutality Cossu visited on a Somali farmworker. The farmworker came to petition the commissioner about his Italian employer's refusal to pay his wages. Cossu decided to visit the plantation and investigate the problem. He took Osman and the worker with him. When they reached the site, the plantation owner, Peraglia, claimed the worker had not followed the owner's instruction in performing the task. When the employee contested the owner's claim, Peraglia started whipping the worker. Instead of interceding on the poor man's behalf, Cusso watched the odious affair and then heaped more abuse on him. Cusso's humiliation of Somalis was not limited to such instances. The commissioner often abused Somalis in the streets and sometimes called the local police to publicly flog them. On some occasions, he would even ask his translator to join in the beating, but fortunately Osman was never asked to do so. Cossu was promoted and transferred to Merka in 1934. The behavior of his replacement, Cesare Del Prato, toward Somalis was the exact opposite of Cossu's.

In mid-1935 Osman was offered a transfer to Mogadishu to work at the accountant general's office, but he declined the offer even though it would have

given him an opportunity to gain further training in nursing. A few days later, a friend, Mohamed S. Ramadan, introduced him to a distant cousin, Asha Elmi Mataan. Asha, who was seventeen years of age, had left a marriage her father forced on her with an Arab man from Belet Weyne, Mohamad Jabiri. When Osman proposed marriage to her, she insisted that he get her father's consent. He liked her response and immediately wrote a letter to the father, who lived in Galkayo. Two of Osman's friends, Mohamed Awale Liban,[14] a clerk at the resident commissioner's office in Galkayo, and Farah Galti of San Marzano delivered the letter. Asha promised Osman that she would either wait for him in Galkayo or come back with the blessing of her father. His friends in Galkayo wrote back and informed him that the father was not opposed to his proposal. Emboldened by the report, Osman immediately left for Galkayo, on October 15,[15] via the ocean route to Hobyo. The boat journey from Mogadishu to Hobyo took thirty-six hours, and Osman suffered seasickness; this was his first boat trip.[16] Osman's friends helped him a great deal by acting as intermediaries between him and Asha's father. One of these friends, Sheikh Abdullahi Mursal, was a colleague of Osman's in the nursing school and in Martini Hospital. He left that service and became a qadi (religious judge) in Galkayo. Asha's father had great expectations and demanded that the young suitor provide twenty camels for his daughter's dowry. When the friends relayed the message to Osman, he jokingly remarked that his suitcase was too small to carry camels. He told them that all he had was savings of 1,500 lire. Osman implored his future father-in-law to trust him and promised that he would work hard to make his daughter happy and would treat the father with utmost respect. However the friends managed it, the old man settled for 2,000 lire, which a distant relative of Osman's in Galkayo helped him with. The marriage was consummated on October 23, 1935. Asha remained in Galkayo until Ramadan was over, but eight days after the wedding, her husband went back to Mogadishu.

Once in Mogadishu, Osman found that the Italians had begun preparing for war and that Haji Farah had been transferred to Mogadishu to interpret for General Rodolfo Graziani during the war operations. Osman took over Haji Farah's position in Shalambot, and Prato told him that if he had had fluency in Arabic, he would have been seconded to war operations too. On Prato's recommendation Osman was promoted to first-class rank in clerical services during the year.

Before leaving Mogadishu for his new post Osman heard that three of his friends in Shalambot, Ahmed Mohamud, Osman Hussein, and Mohamud Aflow, were in jail. A mutual friend, Warsame Omer, had accused them of being anti-Italian and pro-Ethiopia. He reported to the police that the three men claimed that Ethiopia would win the war and occupy Somalia and advised everybody to convert their lire into gold. Warsame had a reputation for being unreliable, and people thought his accusation was groundless. There was concern in the town

that military justice might precipitously condemn the three friends. Once he reached Shalambot, Osman sought out the informer and told him that what he had done was reprehensible. Warsame defended himself by declaring that his action was revenge against Ahmed Mohamud, who had tried to seduce his wife. Osman challenged the accuser's excuse, who finally admitted that he had concocted the story and agreed to confess his wrongdoing in the presence of two other friends. The latter two were civil servants in Shalambot. Osman and the two witnesses decided to wait to see if the accused were acquitted and to not report their finding to the authorities.

Osman was worried about what might happen and went to the resident commissioner on the day the military tribunal was to convene. He asked the commissioner what he thought would be the outcome of the case, since his friend, Avvocato Cattaneo, was a military prosecutor. Prato was sorrowful and replied that the poor devils were at serious risk of conviction, although some senior officers did not believe the accuser's claims. At that moment Osman decided to divulge his information to the commissioner. Prato advised him to have Warsame admit his guilt in Prato's presence, as the military prosecutors would not believe Osman or his cowitnesses. The commissioner did not want his clerk to be indicted for perjury. Osman rushed to Warsame and told him that those he falsely accused faced death unless he admitted his fabrication to the commissioner, who would help him with defense. Warsame accepted the proposition and admitted his ill deed to Prato. The commissioner immediately sent a cable to the military prosecutors and to the defense lawyer informing them of the development. Two days later, the accuser and the three witnesses were summoned to Mogadishu. The military prosecutors tried to intimidate the witnesses into retracting their story, but in the end they released them. The military authorities tried to convince the administration to take disciplinary action against Osman and the other civil servants, but Prato defended them successfully. Warsame was sentenced to three months in prison and discharged from his job. The accused individuals were immediately freed.[17]

Asha finally joined Osman in Shalambot in February 1936, and the two established their household. Two years later their eldest son, Abdulkadir, was born, followed by another son, Mohamed. Osman flourished professionally under Prato, as he was promoted twice. However, his success did not protect him from rampant colonialist abuse. Osman went to Mogadishu for a three-day holiday, sometime in 1939, and on his return journey encountered the ugly face of fascism. He went to the Mogadishu bus station to catch a ride back to Shalambot on the Italian-managed bus line Compagnia Italiana Trasporti Africa Orientale (CITAO). When it was time to purchase the ticket, he and other Somalis were told to wait until all white passengers were served. Seating in these buses was segregated into two compartments, white and nonwhite. If the whites-only

compartment was full and one more Italian showed up at the last minute, then all Somalis had to vacate their seats. On this day Osman and a few other Somalis were able to purchase their tickets after a long wait. The trip took several hours, and Osman rang the stop bell as the bus approached the native village just about half a mile from the Italian settlement. The driver did not heed the request. Osman was annoyed by the lack of consideration, particularly since the few Somalis on the bus had luggage to carry. As he got off the bus Osman politely asked the driver why he did not honor his request to stop at the native village. The driver, Rossi, became incensed at the audacity of this native to question him. Rossi shouted at Osman and told him that he should never dare ask such a question. He repeatedly yelled, "Do you understand?" Osman retorted, "I understand, and that means I will never travel on CITAO buses." Osman took his luggage and set off toward town, but the driver ran after him hurling profanities and threatening to smash his face. Osman turned around to face the driver and calmly replied, "If you call me an SOB, then you are one, but go ahead and hit me." He reminded the driver that he expected respect, since he was a paying customer. At that point four white men came from a nearby restaurant and took Osman and another Somali, Hassan Lughay, by the shoulder and dragged them off to the restaurant. In the process Osman lost his luggage, which was mostly books. The two Somalis were taken from the restaurant and bused to a roadblock, where white vigilantes ordered them into a cell. The whites released Osman when they discovered that he was an officer at the resident commissioner's office, but they submitted a report to his superior.

Next morning, Osman went to the office early and wrote a report on the incident and demanded justice. He left his appeal on the commissioner's desk. Telephone calls started pouring in before the commissioner finished reading Osman's petition. The calls were from the judicial officer of the region, Fagotto; the secretary of the Fascist Party, Pelosi; and the captain of Italian Africa police, Lipari. The first two witnessed the incident. The callers told the commissioner that Osman was a bad example to other natives. They demanded a fitting punishment, since Osman was bold enough to voice his displeasure with the service of CITAO and its founders, which included the minister of colonies, Terruzzi. Prato had a lot of difficulty defending Osman but managed to forestall further damage to him. The callers tried to extract an apology from Osman, but in tears he refused them.

Osman's hay fever got worse, and three months after the aforementioned incident his doctor, Gentilini, recommended that he be transferred to another area where his discomfort would be less. Armed with the doctor's report, he sought Cossu in Merka to approve the doctor's counsel.[18] Cossu met Osman informally in his residence and inquired about his health and that of his family. Cossu told him that he had wanted to see him for some time and noted the bus incident in

passing. Osman apologized that the authorities in Mogadishu had heard about it but added that he could not bear to be unjustly abused by another mortal. Cossu went into a tirade and asked what he meant by a "mortal." He was surprised that Osman was not repentant, as Prato had indicated. Cossu continued his angry tirade and told the clerk that he was fortunate, as Prato had personally blocked a proposal that would have deported him to Migiurtinia.[19] Osman refused to buckle under pressure even when Cossu told him that whites were superior to Osman in the same way that he was superior to a person from Reer Maanyo.[20] This last remark infuriated Osman rather than having the intended effect of appeasing him into submission. Osman, with tears in his eyes, told Cossu that he did not feel superior or inferior to any other human being and apologetically added that if this remark was offensive, Cossu could strike him if the law permitted such an act. Cossu was inflamed and shouted at Osman that he could not stay if he continued to think like this. Cossu rhetorically asked if Caroselli, the governor of the colony, was just like Cossu. Osman's response was that the governor was professionally his superior but not as a human being. This seemingly arrogant rejoinder further inflamed Cossu, who bluntly told Osman that a black man would never be the equal of a white man. He then asked Osman to leave, who replied that he was there only to request a transfer. Cossu looked at the document and told him to take it to the commissioner.

A day later, Osman reported the exchange with Cossu to Prato. The commissioner rebuked Osman for bypassing him and told the young officer to drop the request for transfer lest Cossu use that opportunity to punish him. Prato promised him that he would try to find a way to get him leave for some time out of the area.

Osman was exceptionally critical about colonialism in general and fascism in particular. However, he never lost sight of the importance and significance of individuality even in such an inhuman order. It was common for nearly all Italian colonialists, whether in the public or private sector, to treat Somalis with indignity. Higher colonial authorities sanctioned the treatment and relished humiliating and brutalizing Somalis.[21] Osman divided Italian colonialists into three groups. The majority of the officers, like Cossu, sadistically enjoyed degrading Somalis and looked for every opportunity to callously abuse the hapless subalterns. The second group, a very small minority of officers, reluctantly applied the policy but tried to soften its bite. Prato most exemplified the second group. He upheld white privileges decreed by higher authorities, but he went the extra distance to demonstrate his differences with the policy and treated his professional subordinates like Osman with a great deal of sensitivity. Prato's dilemma was how to enforce the law and colonial morals while minding the humanity of the subject population. The precarious nature of this balancing act is best illustrated by one incident in Shalambot. An Italian mechanic, sixty-year-old Martini, provoked a

Somali driver, Hilowle Macalin, who worked with him. Hilowle could not take the indignity and slapped the mechanic in the face. Other Italians who were in the vicinity came to Martini's rescue and mercilessly flogged Hilowle.[22] They misreported the incident to the resident commissioner, who immediately condemned Hilowle to a month of forced labor. Osman was troubled by the harshness of the penalty and raised his concerns with Prato. The commissioner replied, "How could Hilowle, being such a strong young man, beat a man as old as his father?" Osman felt that the commissioner's response had some merit, although the jail sentence was still very harsh. Osman felt that Prato's attitude did not justify Italian superiority as others would have done in similar circumstances. In a second incident, a young Italian man, son of Colonel Erberto Elia, a plantation owner, fought with a crippled Somali (Abdirahman Lughay), who was employed by Shell-Besse Company. The crippled man easily manhandled the young Italian. When the case was brought before the commissioner, he used the same logic in faulting the Italian for fighting with a handicapped man. The third group, and the most abusive, were the settlers who established plantations along the rivers. This group not only dispossessed peasants and herders from their land but also treated them as disposable beasts. The brutality of this group is best captured in E. Sylvia Pankhurst's book *Ex-Italian Somaliland*.

Osman demonstrated similar analytical acuity in evaluating Italian colonialism. He clearly recognized that Italy did nothing it could be proud of during its colonial heyday in Somalia. However, its record of abuse was relatively mild before the rise of fascism and the arrival of Governor De Vecchi. The fascists embarked on infrastructure development, and the colony's boundaries were extended to the northeast and areas that form part of present-day Somali Ethiopia. These were positive interventions that Somalia, when independent, would build on. The fascist accomplishments, such as infrastructure and territorial expansion, which were unfortunately reversed after World War II, of the fascist period were notable, but the cost imposed on Somalis in the form of forced and bonded labor, lands alienation, and collective humiliation was egregious.

The one project that epitomized fascist rule in Somalia and that Osman observed firsthand was the colony of Janale. The establishment supplied forced labor, drawn from the vicinity of the Shabelle River valley and the Upper Jubba region, to the white plantations. Those compelled to become corvée were reduced to slavery as whole families were dispossessed of their land and discarded as field hands in and around Janale. Every settler had at his disposal thirty to one hundred families depending on the size of his plantation.[23] Plantation owners were permitted to pay the meager wage of two lire per day and provide two pounds of maize for the men (less for women) who satisfactorily completed their piecework.

Families were arbitrarily enslaved and taken from their villages as long as they were able to work, and they had to abandon their houses, their farms and

their cattle. Even well-to-do families, employing other people, were taken away from their properties. When poor nutrition, unhealthy environment, and hard work disabled the head of the family, he was sent back to his village. The authorities never compensated the disabled but compelled local chiefs to provide substitutes for the crippled workers.[24] In this fashion whole villages were depopulated, native farmlands reverted to bush, and the lucky ones who were not conscripted moved away from the region to escape the fate of their neighbors.

Fascist rule in the Janale plantations was atrocious. One of the most heinous deeds of the Italian settlers, which colonial authorities sanctioned, was forcibly uniting men and women to increase the labor force. Another was the punishment meted out to those who attempted to flee. The unfortunates who were caught were suspended from a bar with the tips of their toes barely touching the ground.[25] In later years vicious flogging became the norm and replaced suspension from the bar. Elsewhere, the fascist authorities introduced a new rule, in certain areas in the interior of the country and among the armed forces, that barred Somalis from entering offices with their shoes on. In line with the colonial strategy of divide and rule, this rule was not applied to all Somalis. The cruel environment in Janale and along the Shabelle reminded Osman of the inhuman conditions depicted in novels he had read, such as those by Arthur Conan Doyle and Rafael Sabatini, who described slave labor in the Caribbean in the eighteenth century.[26]

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 temporarily created Italian East Africa and united three Somali territories that had been heretofore divided. For a short time, it seemed the fascist regime would be finally successful in fulfilling its dream of creating a dominant presence in East Africa. However, that illusion was dispelled by the quick British advance from its East African base in 1941.

Businessman in Belet Weyne and SYL Member

For the next decade Osman built a small business enterprise in Belet Weyne, which taught him a different set of skills, and he flourished as an entrepreneur. His business, a retail shop and gas station, was modest but provided an economic base that would reinforce his autonomy for the rest of his life. In addition, he had opportunity to read a lot about the emerging postwar world and follow international developments through the radio and newspapers. In the meantime, he learned English during British rule, which further expanded his international scope. The combination of independent businessman and well-informed and literate citizen positioned Osman as one of the most prominent Somali personalities by the end of British rule in Southern Somalia in 1950.

Once the British Military Administration took over Somalia, all Italian government employees were relieved of their jobs. Osman suffered the same fate, but like many he was given a severance equal to several months' pay. He used

the payment and his savings to establish his business in Belet Weyne and a family house. Moreover, he jointly owned a trade truck with Haji Farah. The truck transported commodities to the Somali region in Ethiopia and British Somaliland. Early in this period Osman made his first business trip to Hargeisa and met Hargeisa's biggest merchant, Jirdeh Hussein.

After establishing his business in Belet Weyne he traveled to Mogadishu in 1944 and met the men of the Somali Youth Club (SYC), which changed its name to Somali Youth League (SYL) in 1945, and became member number thirty. He also registered Abdullahi Issa Mohamoud as member number twenty-nine. Upon his return to Belet Weyne he told Sheikh Ali Jimale about the new organization, who subsequently joined. The SYC opened a branch office in Belet Weyne a year later and Osman and Jimale rotated as the SYC branch secretary. In the meantime Osman wrote letters to the editorial pages of British newspapers defending Somali rights. He also took part in some of the activities of the Italian-Somali Cultural Association in Mogadishu in 1950, often defending the Somali interest.

Osman's family stayed in Belet Weyne, but he kept an apartment in Mogadishu. His two older sons went to Italian schools in Mogadishu. One day the father asked his younger son what he was taught in school and Mohamed responded that he learned that Maria was the mother of God. Osman, a devout Muslim, was troubled by the response and immediately took the children back to Belet Weyne.

Osman's work and experience in the 1940s created a unique platform as the winds of liberation gathered force. He became an adept business manager, and his business ensured that he remained economically self-reliant. While he nurtured his business, he also kept himself well informed about developments in the world through reading. His fluency in Italian and working knowledge of English enabled him to access information through papers, books, and radio newscasts. By the end of the decade he was a critical member of SYL and was quickly recognized as the party's strategic thinker.

Coda

Deprivation and destitution was a relatively common fate for a significant proportion of the Somali population during Osman's youth. He was a very poor orphan, losing his mother in his first year, and then his father was mutilated by a lion. He inherited no family assets and survived those tender years thanks to the generosity of a pastoral family who employed his father as stockkeeper. Through the kindness of others and his strong drive to make something of himself, Osman beat the odds by his late teen years. Although he had but three years of formal education, he rose to become one of the most literate Somalis by the early 1940s. His fluency in Italian was unsurpassed by many in the colony, and his wide reading in world affairs helped him become the most politically aware Somali in the territory.

Osman's struggles and his successes gave him certain unique qualities that served him and Somalia well for the next few decades. First, his livelihood struggles culminated in literary and business success. These assets and experiences gave him self-confidence such that he never doubted his ability to look after his family without being dependent on favors from individuals or authorities. Self-reliance of this sort was rare among the emerging nationalist elite in the late 1940s. Second, his experience with fascism, the injustices, and the brutality it imposed on Somalis made him exceptionally aware of the pain of tyranny. His developing nationalist identity was anchored in such humane sentiments, which made him very unusual among the elite. Third, as a result of his abiding commitment to justice he developed a political modus operandi that favored compromise among competing interests. Fourth, his close contact with the arrogant and arbitrary rule of the fascists ingrained in him an unwavering commitment to the rule of law and social justice. Finally, unlike some members of the Somali elite, he differentiated kinship from clanist politics and never imagined needing kinship relations to get ahead and gain favors. Through these experiences Osman emerged as an exceptionally grounded civic nationalist and a humane person.

3 Abdirazak H. Hussen

From Camel Boy to Freedom Fighter

The early life experience of Abdirazak H. Hussen was quite different from that of Osman despite the general social and political settings in Italian Somaliland being broadly similar.[1] He was spared direct contact with the cold face of Italian fascism in his early life because he grew up in the remote northeast of the country and also because he was about fifteen years younger than Osman. However, Hussen's dealings with British and then Italian colonialism, in his middle years, involved violent encounters that had lasting effects on his health and nationalist character. Further, Hussen's effort to make a life for himself took a similar route to Osman's, although the particularities of their journeys were different. Hussen's livelihood struggles and violent confrontations with the colonialists nurtured four qualities that shaped his political leadership: resolute determination to secure a livelihood, extraordinary self-discipline, hard work, and courage. These qualities were visible at three formative periods: childhood, in the colonial service, and as member of the liberation movement.

Childhood

Hussen was born in a pastoral camp in the Nugal region of northeastern Somalia around 1925. His exact date and place of birth are unknown as it was uncommon for pastoralists to record such personal details. His father, Haji Hussen, was a well-known elder in the region who had three wives and a very large family even by the standards of the time. He fathered twenty-four sons and thirteen daughters. Hussen's mother, Anbaro Firdhiye Mohamed, was the youngest wife and had ten children of whom Hussen was the seventh. Anbaro passed away when Hussen was six. Soon thereafter Hussen began his duties as a camel herder, which kept him away from the settlement for prolonged periods. However, his religious father wanted to ensure that his sons gained a basic knowledge of Islam and consequently looked for a Quranic teacher. Once Haji Hussen secured the service of a teacher from the coastal port of Eil, he arranged that his camel herd did not move too far from the settlement so as to enable his children to learn the Quran. This arrangement lasted for three years, and Hussen was able

to memorize nine Juz[2] of the Quran. Unfortunately, the father suddenly died and the boy and his young siblings were left parentless. Hussen's older brother took over the responsibilities of the family, but a short while later the young boy escaped the settlement by clandestinely following a nomadic caravan until he reached the town of Galkayo.

Galkayo was the first town of any size Hussen had ever seen, but the energetic young boy felt at home as one of his sisters lived there with her family. Hussen immediately enrolled in the local madrassa, managed by Sheikh Mohamed Issa. The teacher was influenced by progressive Islamic teachings and would often ask his students in Arabic, "Limaada ta'akhara Al Muslimuum was taqadama qayrahum?" (Why have the Muslims fallen behind and their equals progressed?). Hussen recollects that this message brought home to him the nature of colonialism and that this was the first nationalist message he received, although he was too young to appreciate its significance. The Italian colonial authorities suspected that this madrassa was a hotbed of Islam and kept an eye on its operations. Hussen remained in the madrassa for nearly three years and was promoted several times, as he excelled in his studies.

One afternoon Hussen and his younger brother, Abdinasir, were approached by a truck driver, Dasho, who saw a resemblance between Abdinasir and someone he knew in Mogadishu. He asked the boy if he was the brother of San Wayne (Big Nose), who was in fact their brother. When the little boy, unaware of his brother's nickname, said no, the driver then asked if he had a brother in Mogadishu. Abdinasir answered yes, and then the driver asked the two boys if they wanted to go to Mogadishu to see their brother. The boys could not believe their luck and jumped at the opportunity. Dangerous as this might seem to contemporary audiences, such an adventure was not particularly unusual at the time.[3] The journey took three days over unpaved roads. The driver dropped them in Mogadishu in late afternoon, and they had to sleep in the street that night. Next morning they learned that their brother was no longer in Mogadishu, as he was one of the many Somali truck owners and drivers sequestered by the Italians for the war effort in Ethiopia in 1937.[4] They heard that their brother was in Negele in Ethiopia.

Disappointed but not dismayed, they thought of other relatives who were in Mogadishu to help them. Just before noon prayers one of their cousins surprisingly came upon them on his way to the mosque. Hassan Lugey, who worked as a shopkeeper, took them to prayers, gave them lunch, and allowed them to sleep in the shop for several nights. Later he introduced the boys to another relative, Jama Gurray, who owned a meat shop and who invited the kids to have their meals at his house. Left to their own devices the boys searched the town, and the younger Abdinasir found a job in an Italian general store. This shop catered to the rapidly growing Italian population who came to the colony to build Mussolini's East Africa empire. Meanwhile, Hussen learned about the Italian school for natives and

enrolled in it. Nuns at the school taught natives rudimentary Italian, a bit of Italian history centered on Mussolini, and arithmetic to prepare them to staff lower rungs of the colonial administration. The school closed after only two years, in 1939, as the war intensified.

While in the Italian school, Hussen was given a job in a major store owned by an in-law. This was his first paying job and provided him a certain degree of security, which he had not had since he left his nomadic home. But this happy condition did not last long. The war drained all resources of the colony and nearly all stores folded. As the British forces closed the noose on the Italians, the economy came to standstill. Whatever little formal employment existed in the colony declined sharply during the hostilities. Many young Somalis were desperate for jobs and enlisted in the colonial military. Three of Hussen's brothers and two of his cousins enlisted, and Hussen was drafted, but he was released after his community elders confirmed his young age.

The British drove the Italians from Southern Somalia and occupied Mogadishu in 1940. Hussen looked around for employment opportunities but realized that he had to do something independently for himself. He met one of his brothers, Abdisamad, who was a domestic assistant for an Italian in Barava. Abdisamad suggested that the two of them should pool their savings, buy a truck from one of their cousins, and take advantage of the increased trade generated as a result of British occupation of Ethiopia.[5] They secured the truck, purchased a cargo of sugar, and set out to Negele, where they thought their older brother was working. Unfortunately, the truck broke down about sixty miles west of Mogadishu, in the Dafeed region, and the older brother had to return to the city to get parts to repair it while Hussen minded the truck. It was the rainy season, and Dafeed was a major mosquito zone. Hussen had no protection from the insects for two long days. His brother returned with the parts, they fixed the vehicle, and they proceeded to their destination. In Negele they found their brother, Big Nose. They sold the cargo in the market and then purchased another cargo that was destined for another town 120 miles west of Negele, but Hussen succumbed to malaria and could not travel. Abdisamad delivered the goods by himself, and set off for Negele. Before he reached it the British commanding officer of the area commandeered the truck for the war. The commander gave Abdisamad a letter acknowledging confiscation of the truck and his right to reimbursement from the British commissioner in Negele.

The commissioner in Negele told Abdisamad that he did not have the money to pay him but forwarded the request to Mogadishu. When he realized that the money from the British was not forthcoming, Hussen went back to Mogadishu penniless and ill with malaria. In Mogadishu he found refuge in the home of the relative with the meat shop, Jama Gurray. The next day an old customer of his, Elmi Bullaleh, a nurse, saw him and was shocked by his condition. When Hussen

told him of his malaria, the nurse gave him several injections over the following week, which cured him.

Desperate and destitute, he looked around for employment. This was late in 1942. He applied to the British administration headquarters in Mogadishu and received an offer a few days later. Hussen did not speak English, but he had gained some fluency in Italian with a modicum of understanding of Kiswahili. The chief administrator was General Beckingham, who had two assistants. One assistant was an Italian named Daniel. The British administration needed Italians since everything in Southern Somalia law was in Italian. Daniel had a secretary, whose beauty Hussen admired and who was Hussen's supervisor. Hussen quickly learned his cleaning duties and was given other tasks as an errand boy. Toward the end of his first month of employment Hussen accidently saw Daniel and the secretary in a compromising position in the back room of the office, but he quickly turned away and waited in the front office. Because of his ability to keep quiet about what he had seen, as well as his being a fast learner with a strong work ethic, his superiors valued his services. As coffee lovers, the two Europeans often gave Hussen twenty shillings to get them coffee from the famous Italian restaurant Croce del Sud (Southern Cross) nearby. The coffee cost only a few shillings, and they often let him keep the change. Six months into Hussen's job, Daniel and the secretary were transferred to Baidoa, and Hussen went with them. But within a few months Daniel was transferred to Nairobi, and although he wanted Hussen to come with him to Kenya, Hussen could not. Daniel recommended Hussen for a job in the signal squadron, and Hussen accepted it in November 1943.

An Impatient Youth in the Colonial Service

In modern Somali history 1943 is a critical year: the leading modern nationalist movement was established in Mogadishu. Hussen's employment created opportunities for him to watch the nationalist question up close because the signal squadron was central to the colonial state's communication infrastructure. The signal squadron was part of the military service, and Hussen and other new recruits were given full military training that lasted six months. Hussen's cohort of five was the second of its kind the British trained, and all five were given the rank of private first class. The squadron was headed by a British colonel, and his white team trained Somalis in signal squadron tasks so that the British could attend to more senior administrative and managerial tasks. Hussen was sent to Belet Weyne, where he met Mohamed Shira Lawaha, his new supervisor. Hussen was responsible for maintaining the battery, charging it, and keeping all equipment in mint shape. After about a month of on-the-job training, he was transferred to Wardeer as station head. Wardeer had no permanent buildings, and government people stayed in tents. Just before 1943's end, Hussen was transferred yet again to

another station, Bugol Manyo, about 180 miles from Negele. The squadron was stationed here because of the large numbers of Somalis who were former Italian soldiers (dubbed Governo Jagahiir) and who roamed the area, terrorizing communities. The squadron supported a military expedition dispatched to the area. It took three months to defeat the bandits, and then Hussen was transferred to Dolo and then to Qalafo on the Shabelle River.

Unfortunately, the vicinity around Qalafo was also plagued by the remnants of bandits left behind by the Italian forces. The bandits killed a British lieutenant, for which the colonial administration sought revenge. British retaliation was random and went well beyond proportional measures with massive communal roundups. Captain Fitzpatrick, commanding British officer in Qalafo, who Somalis nicknamed "afar indhood" (the four eyed), had a reputation for cruelty. Hussen's first encounter with Fitzpatrick was disturbing and deteriorated quickly. The commander called him into his office on Hussen's first day and asked who he was. Hussen recognized the coded nature of the question as he was already influenced by the principles of SYL. He responded that he was a Somali, but this was not the answer Fitzpatrick expected. Fitzpatrick wanted to know Hussen's pedigree to locate him in a political camp. To get around Hussen's reticence, Fitzpatrick asked him from where he hailed. When Hussen responded that he was from Galkayo, the commander, evidently putting stock in the stereotype that people from Galkayo were hard-headed, smiled and told him that he was unlucky to be from that town and to be transferred to Fitzpatrick's station. Hussen countered that they would have no difficulty, since he intended to do his assigned duties well. Fitzpatrick and his team, including Hussen, went on two missions, and all went well. In these operations Fitzpatrick rounded up large herds of camels from the nomads, and he also withheld the salaries of the chiefs in area, who were employees of the state. Such collective penalties continued, although the commander, Collinwood, stationed in Qabridahare, had already punished the community for the same "crimes."[6]

Hussen became enraged after he realized the extent of Fitzpatrick's cruelties. He considered him a mad racist and immediately decided to write a letter protesting Fitzpatrick's unprofessional behavior to the governor in Mogadishu. Because his handwriting would be recognized by Fitzpatrick, Hussen dictated the letter to his younger brother, who was visiting him during his school holiday. Hussen dispatched the letter to Mogadishu. Three days later he put a copy of the letter on Fitzpatrick's desk. When the commander came to work he saw the letter written in Arabic. He called his Arabic interpreter and drove off with him. Fitzpatrick did not say anything to Hussen about the letter until later in the day, when he asked Hussen why he had sent the letter to Mogadishu. A few days after Fitzpatrick saw Hussen's letter, he introduced a new office rule requiring all Somalis entering his office take off their shoes. The first victim of this colonial edict

was a rural police officer, named Ardon. Early one morning Fitzpatrick called for this man, and Ardon hastily entered the office without taking his shoes off. Fitzpatrick was incensed by what the policeman had done and gave Ardon a hard kick in the back. Ardon simply grinned and did not react to the indignity. Hussen reported Ardon's humiliation through the signal network to all corners of the country.

Enraged by Fitzpatrick's arrogance and Ardon's submission to such ignominy, Hussen decided to challenge Fitzpatrick's authority. Early the next day, Hussen delivered his reports to Fitzpatrick, whose desk was on a platform since the room doubled as a court. Fitzpatrick noticed that Hussen did not take his shoes off and scolded him for disobeying the edict. Hussen retorted that this diktat was capricious and not sanctioned by the government. Hussen's attitude infuriated Fitzpatrick, who came down from his platform and punched Hussen in the abdomen. Hussen fought back, and the two men wrestled. Fitzpatrick was much stronger than the skinny Hussen but could not pin him down. He called for Ardon's help. Fitzpatrick instructed Ardon to take "the boy" to the local prison. Hussen was registered in the police occurrence book and locked in a prison cell. A few hours later Hussen was taken back to Fitzpatrick's office and ordered to take his shoes off. Hussen refused and was returned to prison. A day later he was released. Unexpectedly, Hussen received a strange gift of half a truckload of millet from the commander. Hussen could not understand what this gift was for, but he later found out that this was Fitzpatrick's way of making up to those among the staff who suffered his brutality. The next morning a smiling Fitzpatrick came to Hussen's workstation and told him that he would get more rewards if he followed orders. For the next few days everyone was tense. Fitzpatrick did not speak to Hussen but warned that he could be shot for insubordination.

Fitzpatrick was annoyed by the arrogance of this native but decided to wait for another opportunity to teach him a lesson. By this time, Hussen had deeply internalized SYL ideas of national liberation and resistance to colonialism and was in no mood to accept Fitzpatrick's excesses. These contrasting worldviews clashed again a few days later when the commissioner ordered Hussen to vacate the government house where he lived. White officers were coming to town and needed proper accommodation. A few days later Fitzpatrick came to the station while Hussen was busy receiving a message on the wire and asked Hussen why he did not stand up when the boss entered the station. Fitzpatrick then kicked Hussen's chair. Hussen got up, removed his earphones, and started wrestling with the commissioner. Fitzpatrick got on top of Hussen before the latter was able to flip him. The commander called for Ardon, who took Hussen to prison. Later in the day Hussen was freed, but he was raging mad and decided to eliminate this arrogant colonialist.[7]

Hussen went directly from prison to the local blacksmith and asked him to make the sharpest knife possible. His intention was to finish this British colonialist. With the knife in his possession Hussen decided to provoke the commissioner at work the following morning by hiding the station's batteries. When Fitzpatrick came to the office, he could not find the batteries and called for Ardon to fetch Hussen. Hussen took his time responding. As Hussen entered the office Fitzpatrick, waiting at the door, tripped him, and a brawl ensued. Hussen's knife was concealed in the belt of his shorts, but it shifted to his back as the two men wrestled. Fitzpatrick freed himself from Hussen and ran to a house occupied by an Italian storekeeper, Rossi. Rossi locked the door and stood outside to plead with Hussen to calm down. Hussen went to the riverbank and threw the knife in so the police would not retrieve it as evidence. Shortly thereafter the police came for him. They seized Hussen's government-provided gun and took him to prison. After six days of detention the Somali assistant at the station reported the matter to Mogadishu.

The central command of the signal squadron was headed by an arrogant Colonel Shaw who apparently knew about Hussen's earlier complaints about Fitzpatrick. Shaw wired a message to Fitzpatrick that Hussen must be immediately sent to Mogadishu to face justice. But Fitzpatrick decided to prosecute Hussen in his court. As time passed Hussen received many visitors from town who supported him, since he was the most visible Somali in the administration, and as most people knew, he was the only official member of the SYL in town. Hussen had earned a lot of credit with people because he often sent messages for individual Somalis, including merchants who wanted to know the price of commodities in Mogadishu.

Fitzpatrick wanted to humiliate Hussen. He frequently visited him in prison to make certain that he was treated no better than a common criminal. He had the prisoner paraded around in his prison uniform. A month later Hussen's replacement in the signal squadron, Mohamed Shira Lawaha, arrived.[8] Finally, Fitzpatrick decided to bring the prisoner to his court, where he was the judge and the prosecutor. Fitzpatrick laid out the case of disobedience and disloyalty against state authority and asked Hussen to defend himself. Hussen declined to take the bait. On the second day of the trial, Fitzpatrick, claiming that he was mindful of the generosity of British law, announced a sentence of twelve years in prison. Hussen declared that he would appeal this decision. The commissioner wired the decision to Shaw in Mogadishu. Fitzpatrick's Somali translator told Hussen that Shaw asked the commissioner to immediately send the prisoner to Mogadishu, but Fitzpatrick decided to keep him in the station's prison another six months.

Three policemen were dispatched from Mogadishu with instructions to bring the prisoner to headquarters. Fitzpatrick did not resist the transfer. After

two days on the road the inmate and his guards reached Mogadishu, where he was booked into the central prison. After some days in jail, the prisoner appealed his conviction. His case was taken up by a white officer from the Justice Department who interviewed Hussen about what had happened in Qalafo. The judge in the appeals court in Nairobi threw out the case, and Hussen was released.

His immediate attempts at returning to his job were not successful, and he consequently decided to visit his brothers in Negele and Jigjiga. But since there was no direct transport route from Mogadishu to Jigjiga he caught a ride with returning Northern Somali soldiers who had been fighting for the British in Burma.[9] Hussen had his camping bed, a few clothes, and his savings. He concealed some money in his small wooden suitcase and kept the rest in an inner pocket of his trousers. The journey was long and rough, and the convoy took ten days to reach Hargeisa. On the last night of the journey the convoy camped on the outskirts of Hargeisa. The entire group woke up early as everyone was eager to get to Hargeisa. But Hussen found that his wooden suitcase, and the money in it, was missing. After reaching the town he looked for the local signal station, where he found colleagues who hosted him during his stay in Hargeisa.

After enjoying the kind company of his friends for several weeks he made his way to the cosmopolitan center of Dire Dawa. There he met two key Somali personalities, Jama Urdooh, a tea shop owner, and Sheikh Azhari, a learned man of Islam. Within a week of arriving in Dire Dawa, Hussen learned that Emperor Haile Selassie wanted to absorb Somalia and Eritrea into Ethiopia, which explained why the emperor was relatively friendly toward Somalis—it was a way of seducing them to his political agenda. Hussen teamed up with Urdooh to invigorate the SYL, since Hussen knew the principles and the songs of the party. They decided to establish an office, and Urdooh paid the initial rent and bought furniture. Many Somalis came to learn more about the nationalist party and its liberation strategy. This engagement kept Hussen busy for several weeks, while he also studied Islamic thought under the tutorship of Sheikh Azhari.

In the meantime Hussen learned that neither of his brothers was in the region. He decided to spend the remaining months of 1946 in Dire Dawa. He journeyed back to Jigjiga, where, he discovered, Fitzpatrick had been transferred as the chief administrator. When Fitzpatrick discovered that Hussen was in town he called him to his office and enquired what he was doing there and offered him a job. Hussen declined it, noting that the administrator's temperament was a problem for him. Fitzpatrick surprised Hussen by giving him money to pay for transport to Mogadishu, adding that they should put their differences aside. Hussen used the money to hire a truck to transport commodities he had bought in Dire Dawa to Mogadishu, where he made a handsome profit.

Back in Mogadishu Hussen discovered that the signal squadron was now a civilian operation. He applied for and secured his old job, taking over management

of the Isku Shuban station in the northeast of the territory, where he quickly regained his confidence and managed the operation effectively. In Isku Shuban he met the senior Somali clerk in government, Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee. Sharmarkee was relatively well educated by Somali standards, as he had completed middle school and was fluent in Italian. He also had some fluency in English as a result of the British administration's demands. Hussen and Sharmarkee formed the core of the Isku Shuban branch of the SYL in early 1947 and quickly established the party center in Bosaso. They traveled around the region with the district commissioner, Douglass Collins,[10] and established several party branches during these trips.

During the fateful year of 1948 much of the action took place in Mogadishu. Sharmarkee was transferred to Mogadishu in early 1947 and immediately elected to the party's central committee. Hussen moved to Mogadishu at the end of the year for advanced training for his job. Within a few weeks of Hussen's arrival in Mogadishu the four-powers commission, which was to decide on the future of the former Italian colony, came to the city to hear the opinion of the Somali people and learn their preference for a new colonial master. Hussen was caught up in the struggle between the proliberation and pro-Italian forces during the commission's visit.

Shortly after the commission left Somalia, Hussen was transferred to the signal station in Baidoa. In Baidoa he was the chief SYL person, and he monitored cash sent by the Italians to their supporters in the area. These pro-Italian Somalis in Baidoa agitated for the restoration of Italian rule, but the police kept them in check for the time being.

Conclusion

Hussen's Quranic teacher from his madrassa days in Galkayo, who often asked his pupils why Muslims had fallen behind and others advanced, might have planted the concept of nationalism in the boy's mind. His encounter with the British, Italian, and Ethiopian colonial authorities in various regions of the Somali-inhabited world concretized for him what the old Quranic teacher had in mind. Through these experiences Hussen internalized a worldview that would guide him for the rest of his life.

First, his journeys from the pastoral camps to different parts of the Somali territories and the tumultuous experience he had gave him a high degree of self-confidence that instilled in him the will to succeed even against incredible odds. Throughout this period he engaged in self-improvement whether it was on the job or outside it, and such efforts reinforced his sense of self-will. Second, from the personal and professional encounters he had with Italian and British colonialists, he learned the indignity of colonial servitude and the need for Somalis to liberate themselves. The abusive colonial authorities convinced him that the

only way out of this enslavement was a deep commitment to and support for SYL principles. Third, from these experiences and his time in the signal squadron he learned how to manage a public office and realized the need for ethical and constitutional limits on the authority of those in power. Fourth, through this long experience he realized that building national institutions requires more than simply coupling shared cultural values. It demands charting a new political road and building political institutions that would enhance traditional commonalties and create new political commonwealth. Fifth, observing how the SYL was able to withstand Italian cruelties and then outmaneuver the Italian political agenda taught him the centrality of unity of purpose in a democratic order as well as the importance of faithfulness to common cause. Sixth, Hussen came to appreciate the value of modesty for those in authority after seeing the injustice that arrogant power perpetrated. Finally, firm in his beliefs, Hussen would encounter the biggest challenge in his life after Italian rule was restored to Southern Somalia.

4 The Somali Youth League and the Nationalist Project, 1943–1960

Most African liberation leaders, whether Nkrumah, Nyerere, or Kenyatta, established the liberation parties that led their countries to independence. And most of those parties became instruments for the founding leaders' tenacious attachment to political power, thereby losing much of whatever democratic qualities they had. In contrast, the most important liberation leader in Somalia after World War II was not a founding member of the party, let alone its founder. Aden Abdulle Osman joined the Somali Youth Club in 1944, which became the Somali Youth League the next year, and through a democratic process became its leading light. Osman and members of the party preserved the party's democratic ideals and practice during the liberation period and the first postindependence decade. This chapter narrates the story of this unique democratic dynamic between a liberation party and its principal leaders.

World War II and its aftermath created three opportunities in which Somalis could aspire to be free again. First, four of the five Somali regions dominated by different colonial powers (Ethiopia, Britain, and Italy) were loosely united under Britain. As a result of this unification Somalis could move between different regions of their territory without any hindrance from artificial boundaries. The new contacts among Somalis inspired their nationalist spirit,[1] and the leaders of various Somali communities had occasion to meet and think about their future as one nation rather than as a fragmented political or cultural entity.

The sharp and painful memory of fascist rule, Britain's use of freedom as a propaganda weapon against the Italians,[2] and the United Nations' debates on the disposal of former Italian territories instigated an energetic nationalist current. Although patriotic sentiments were on the rise across the Somali landscape, the SYL and the city of Mogadishu became the intellectual hubs of the movement. This chapter examines the rise of the SYL, its tenacious opposition to the reimposition of Italian rule in Southern Somalia, its determined resistance to the return of former fascist administrators after the UN unconscionably appointed Italy to administer a trust territory, the emergence of a new Somali leadership (Aden

Abdulle Osman, Abdullahi Issa, and Abdirazak Haji Hussen), and the nation's movement toward independence and unification of two Somali territories.

The Rise of the Somali Youth League

British occupation of former Italian Somaliland during the 1940s seemed more liberal to Somalis than they could have ever imagined under Italy. A more tolerant political environment emboldened a group of young Somalis to form a social club that would advance the Somali nationalist cause.[3] The British administration conditionally endorsed the formation of the Somali Youth Club (SYC) in 1943, as long as its members abstained from politics.[4] The thirteen founding members of the club were Abdulkadir Sheikh Squawadiin (president),[5] Yassin Haji Osman Sharmarkee (general secretary), Haji Mohamed Hussein, Osman Raage, Dahir Haji Osman Sharmarkee, Huudow Maalin, Mohamud Abdulle (Hayeysi), Mohamed Osman Barrba, Saydiin Hersi Noor, Mohamed Ali Nur, Mohamed Farah Wehelye, Ali Verdura, and Dheere Haji Dheere.

In line with the British condition prohibiting the SYC from engaging in political activities, the club's basic bylaws were civic, as its oath of membership shows: "I swear by Almighty God that I will not take any action against any Somali. In trouble I promise to help the Somali. I will become the brother of all other members. I will not reveal the name of my tribe. In matters of marriage I will not discriminate between the Somali tribes and the Midgan, Yibirh, Yaha and Tomals."[6] Three features were central to the club's constitution. First, tribal favoritism was prohibited as the basis of social and political association or advancement in the public realm. Second, the SYC decreed equality among Somalis and forbade discrimination among them, and any Somali of outstanding character could become a member of the club provided he or she subscribed to its principles and two members supported the candidacy. Third, the reunification of the Somalilands, currently under five colonial administrations, was a foundational principle.[7]

Other associations whose principles contrasted sharply with the SYC were formed a few months after it was. Among these were the Hamer Youth Club and the Patriotic Beneficence Union. The principles of the first were somewhat similar to those of the SYC, despite being parochial. In contrast, the Patriotic Beneficence Union was sectarian in orientation.

The SYC's message steadily spread among the population, and the organization established branches in many regions of the land to mobilize the public and orient its sentiments. Each branch had its own officers, but the final authority of the club rested with the central committee (CC) in Mogadishu. SYC members paid monthly membership fees, and its officers engaged in fund-raising activity during their weekly meetings. The club remained within its circumscribed

nonpolitical mandate but quietly peddled the importance of collective national interest and opposed the evils of colonialism and political tribalism as well as the ills of divisive religious sects. Haji Mohamed Hussein was elected as the first president of the party in 1945.

The doldrums of quiet nationalism came to an end as international concerns pertaining to colonial societies gained attention at the United Nations. One of the foremost topics of discussion among the major world powers was the disposal of former Italian colonies, such as Italian Somaliland. This development stirred club members as they realized that the nation could not move forward without a guided political agenda. Debates among members convinced them that the time was ripe for the club to become a political organization, and founding members decided to transform the association into a political party. It called for its first national congress in April 1947. Among the items debated during this meeting was the name of the new party. The delegate from Belet Weyne, Osman, who was knowledgeable about developments in Pakistan and its dominant party, the Islamic League, proposed the name Somali Youth League, and the congress resoundingly accepted the motion. The league retained the club's constitution with minor modification[8] and reelected Haji Mohamed Hussein as president and Yassin Haji Osman Sharmarkee and Abdullahi Issa as secretary-general and deputy, respectively.[9] Sharmarkee was a capable person, and his loss was felt when he passed away several months later. Issa took up the post.

One of the factors that most inspired the nationalist movement was the proposal put forward by British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin to four major powers (the United States, United Kingdom, USSR, and France) at their meeting in Paris in 1946 on the fate of former Italian colonies. Bevin's proposal, which was one of several plans, advocated the unification of four Somali territories under Britain's control.[10] These were the former Italian Somaliland, the British protectorate of Somaliland, Ethiopian Somaliland, and the Northern Frontier Districts.

> In the interest of the people themselves a single administration should be established for the Somali people of British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, Ogaden and the Reserved Area. In this way the Somali people as a whole would best be enabled to advance towards self-government in accordance with the principles of the trusteeship system. Furthermore artificial internal frontiers, which cut across grazing grounds and hamper economic development of the territory as a whole, would be eliminated.[11]

When the proposal was first discussed in the ministerial forum, the US representative introduced a motion calling for a united Somalia jointly administered as a trust territory by the four powers. The French countered that all Italian colonies should be returned to Italy, and the Soviets sponsored a modified version of the French proposal, but Bevin declared,

> Italy shall renounce her sovereignty over all her colonies; Libya shall be [an] independent state; . . . the Ethiopian Government should be heard before a final decision is taken on the future of Eritrea, in view of Ethiopian claims to that territory. . . . There should be a study by the deputies of the Council of Foreign Ministers as to the possibility of the creation of a new territory to be known as United Somalia consisting of British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, the Ogaden and the Reserved Area, the last two being under the sovereignty of Ethiopia, in order to provide an economic and ethnic union in the interest of the people. Should there be agreement on this proposal, the United Kingdom should be given the trusteeship for United Somalia, (I) on the grounds that the area was liberated by British Commonwealth forces, and (II) since the United Kingdom would be voluntarily placing the Protectorate of British Somaliland under the Trusteeship system in the interests of the wider Area. If after investigation agreement was not reached on this scheme, the British offer would be withdrawn.[12]

The British proposal failed to gain the support of the other powers, and the ministers were unable to agree on an alternative scenario.[13]

In addition to the French and Soviet opposition to Somali unification, Ethiopia endeavored to claim Somali territory through a variety of tactics. As Robert Hess notes, "Immediately after the war, Emperor Haile Selassie had stressed Ethiopia's claim to Eritrea and Somalia 'as territories incontestably belonging to the Ethiopian Empire since before the Christian era and stolen through Italian aggression.'"[14] Ethiopia used its diplomatic resources in Europe and North America to win sympathy and recompense for suffering Italian aggression. It capitalized on such sympathy to undermine Italian claims on Somalia and made every effort to gain Italian Somaliland as its trust territory. Ethiopia's effort in this regard was described by some British officials as expansionist.[15] By subtly pushing its opposition to Italian rule, Ethiopia sought to co-opt the SYL into accepting its imperial hegemony over Somalia.[16] Finally, Ethiopia attempted to thwart the growing movement among Somalis for Somali unification by misinforming unsuspecting Somalis that it was a ploy to turn them into vassals of the Kenya colony.[17] To counter Northern Somali support for the Bevin plan, a group of protectorate elders was mobilized to petition against a united Somalia nearly a month after a very large number of Somali leaders in Hargeisa signed a petition endorsing the Bevin plan.[18] Ethiopian expansionist effort has been sustained ever since.[19] While Ethiopia was orchestrating this, another Somali group, the Somali National League in Burao led by Mohamoud Jama Urdooh, pressed the district commissioner to let them travel to Mogadishu to discuss Somali issues with the SYL. One of the leading supporters of the SYL was Mohamoud Ahmed Ali, a most respected leader in the protectorate.[20]

The fast-moving pace of international events, particularly the four-powers ministerial meeting in Paris and the UN debates about former Italian colonies,

galvanized the SYL. The CC solicited advice from Somalis in Ethiopia,[21] the British protectorate, and the Kenya Northern Frontier District (NFD), which led to the establishment of party branches in these regions. It was not only the SYL that became active but Somalis in other regions as well. For example, Somalis who lived in the United Kingdom petitioned that government to help Somalis form a united country.[22]

Shortly thereafter, the SYL announced a conference of Somalis from the five regions to discuss how the United Nations could be approached to unite all Somali territories under a UN trusteeship.[23] The invited delegates came to Mogadishu at the end of 1947. Their deliberations focused on how Somalis should deal with the four-powers commission,[24] which was expected to visit the country in early 1948. The purpose of the four-powers commission's visit was to gauge public opinion about the future of their country. Conferees unanimously endorsed the party's plea to the UN regarding the unification of the Somalilands.[25] The delegates decided to mobilize the Somali public behind the SYL agenda, which called for independence after a ten-year UN trusteeship.[26]

As the SYL gained strength across the country, the Italians who lived in Somalia were terrified of the movement's influence on their colonial interests.[27] Italian community leaders were former civil servants in the prewar fascist administration. One of the key fascists brought back to oppose the SYL was Baron Beretelli.[28] To counter the SYL's nationalist agenda the Italians adopted the strategy of providing material and moral support to the sectarian-based Somali parties. The major ones included the Patriotic Beneficence Union (known as Jumiya, founded in 1943), which supported the restoration of Italian rule over Somalia. Italian activists aided the formation of an umbrella organization, the Conferenza, in September 1948, made up of the Jumiya and other smaller, similar-minded organizations. As the commission's arrival approached, the Italians prepared the Conferenza's agenda and supported it financially and logistically.[29] Forces opposed to the SYL agenda embarked on open propaganda against the nationalist movement that deeply worried the authorities. The British Military Administration warned the Italians that their activities might endanger public safety, but the Italians failed to heed the warning.

Soon after the commissioners[30] arrived in Mogadishu on January 4 and 6, 1948, the British administrator informed all political parties that no demonstrations would be allowed during the commission's visit out of public safety concerns. Simultaneously, the secretary of the administration wrote to the commission secretary asking for his opinion about the permissibility of demonstrations by political parties. The commission secretary answered that, given the nature of their mission, "political parties should be permitted to organize demonstrations."[31] The SYL applied for permission to hold its demonstration on January 11 at three o'clock. In contrast, the Conferenza, without permission, conducted its demonstrations

on January 7 and 8. Italian activists were deeply involved in these demonstrations. Pro-Italian demonstrators harassed anyone they considered British or Somalis sympathetic to the SYL. Ignoring the ban on loud broadcasts, the fascists goaded the SYL with malicious propaganda. But despite the excitement the activities generated, the SYL stayed away from the events, and consequently no violence was reported. The SYL received a permit to hold its demonstration on the appointed date, but the Conferenza made it clear that it intended to disrupt rallies organized by parties opposed to the restoration of Italian rule. Given this threat, the SYL was anxious about the potential for violence. Consequently, it sent a deputation consisting of party leaders to a Conferenza meeting on January 10 to request that the Conferenza not interfere with its public expressions. Conferenza leaders dismissed the SYL's appeal and told the envoys that the city belonged to Conferenza supporters and that other groups would be barred from publicly displaying their strength. The SYL notified the administration about this worrisome development.

The SYL knew the Italians were orchestrating the Conferenza's attempts to intimidate SYL supporters. Therefore, the party directly confronted the Italians and warned them that if their attempts to play one Somali group against another led to the loss of Somali lives, they alone would be held accountable.[32] The SYL's admonition fell on deaf ears, as the Italians were confident about the superiority and the strength of their Somali collaborators. On that fateful day, January 11, SYL leaders assembled their supporters in the area of the city that came to be known as Dhagahtuur (stone thrower). The SYL organized thousands of people who came from city neighborhoods and from afar into a disciplined voice that would send a clear message. About three thousand women and children were left at the SYL head office while the men rehearsed for the afternoon parade. Conferenza leaders met members of the administration in the morning, as their own supporters assembled in three different locations not far from SYL headquarters. They informed the officers of their plan to demonstrate on the same day and insisted on marching behind the SYL.[33] The administration sent for SYL leaders and tried to broker an agreement between the two groups, but before a compromise was reached, violence broke out as Conferenza supporters attacked SYL headquarters around 10:45 a.m. Word of the attack immediately reached party followers, and SYL activists rushed to defend their headquarters.[34] The activists chased away the pro-Italian crowd and relentlessly hunted down Italian residents, in accordance with earlier SYL warnings. Abdirazak H. Hussen was one of the key organizers of the counterattack, and the SYL was supplied with weapons and ammunition by a renegade policeman. Within two hours of the attack on the SYL, fifty-three Italians and fourteen Somalis were slain, many others were injured, and much Italian property lay in ruin.[35] SYL activists cleared Italians off the streets, and pro-Italian Somalis retreated to their enclaves. A court report narrates the details of this affair, concluding that

> the immediate cause of the disturbance was the provocative action of the pro-Italian supporters in attempting forcibly to prevent a procession organized for 11 January 1948 by the Somali Youth League to impress the Four Powers Commission with the strength and solidarity of the Somali nationalist movement. Relations between Italians and Somalis had been steadily worsening since the news of the impending arrival of the Four Powers Commission became known, and were strained almost to the breaking point by the tension caused by its arrival. The attack proved to be the climax of pent up feeling, and supporters of the League lost all self-control and turned upon Italians, as the instigators of the opposition, with terrible ferocity.[36]

A statue of an SYL supporter, Hawa Tako, a woman killed by the pro-Italian groups, would grace the city after independence. These events were dubbed the Great Mogadishu Riot of 1948.

The four-powers commission continued with its work despite the riots.[37] Initially, the Russian and French members of the commission proposed that its visits should be limited to a few areas,[38] knowing that the SYL was the only party that had branches in most regions. The commission received the same message everywhere it traveled: reunite all Somalis and place them under a UN trusteeship administration for ten years, and do not reinstate Italian rule.

The SYL's core message was crafted by two Northern Somalis who came to Mogadishu to assist the SYL in communicating with the commission. These were Michael Mariano and Lewis Clement Salool.[39] Two SYL stalwarts, Mohamed Ladane[40] and Ahmed Allor, brought Mariano and Salool from Hargeisa and Dire Dawa, respectively. The SYL arranged lodging for the two in Croce del Sud, the Italian section of the city. Hotelkeepers willingly took the reservations, assuming that their guests were white. The Italian hotel managers were shocked when the two Somalis came to claim their accommodations. Seeing the Italians' hostile reaction, SYL hosts moved the two men to a private residence for safety. Mariano and Salool wrote all the party petitions.

The commission heard two other proposals. The Hamer Youth Club supported the SYL's position, while the Conferenza group unabashedly advocated Italy's return: "With regard to the future of Somaliland, the Conference expresses a wish for Italian trusteeship under United Nations' control for thirty years, with ultimate total independence."[41] Further, the British delegate questioned the accuracy of an insert into the report that suggested that Hizbia Digil Mirifle Somali (HDMS), a regionalist party belonging to the Conferenza, changed its position regarding Italy's return to Somalia.[42] The commission's report also underscored that all Italian political parties in Somaliland—Christian Democrats, Socialists, and Communists—supported the restoration of Italian rule.[43]

The SYL was deeply concerned about the fairness of the report the commission would submit and sent one of its senior members, Abdullahi Issa, to Paris to

be a witness and to lobby the commission. Issa had to get cholera and small pox vaccinations to travel to Europe, and the party discovered that it would take him two weeks to get all the necessary documents. Mohamed Yusuf Muro, a member of the SYL, volunteered to stand in for Issa and got the vaccinations and the vaccination certificate.[44] Issa left for Britain, where he was hosted by the SYL branch in Cardiff and Somali supporters in Kingston upon Hull and Manchester. France denied the SYL envoy the visa he needed to go to Paris, where the commission was meeting, since it did not want to allow a Somali voice to be heard in the meeting. Ali Noor, a member of Somali society in the United Kingdom and later the SYL's representative in Cardiff,[45] clandestinely took Issa to Paris. The latter was denied access to the commission; however, the UN representative promised him that he could attend the UN deliberations on Somalia in New York.[46] Once it became clear that the four powers were unable to agree on how to dispose of Somalia, Issa sailed for New York.

On February 22, 1948, the commission left for Luxor, Egypt, where it continued its work.[47] Subsequently, the commission submitted a contradictory report shaped by European politics rather than the wish of the Somali people. The commissioners disagreed on nearly all the basic facts pertaining to political conditions in Somalia. It is evident from the report that France and the Soviet Union were determined to generate a report that would support Italy's wish to regain its colonial dominion over Somalia. The bias of the Soviet and French commissioners against the SYL is glaringly obvious. Recorded below is how one part of the report depicted the SYL's agenda and the response of the Soviet delegate:

> The Somali Youth League favours trusteeship of the Four Powers under United Nations' control for ten years, the population to be educated for self-government in that time. It is opposed to Italian trusteeship "under any circumstances" and does not wish Ethiopian or general United Nations' trusteeship. It has an elaborate programme for the future, including provision for education, economic development, development of organs of self-government, and a draft constitution. . . . If its request for Four Power trusteeship should not be possible, the League would accept trusteeship of any of the Four Powers chosen by the Four Powers.[48]

A footnote authored by the Soviet delegate dismissed the SYL's program: "The Programme prepared by the Somali Youth League is a primitive document, has many contradictions and cannot be considered serious." The French commissioner added, "In the course of its enquiry the Commission has observed that the interference of the League in tribal matters often gave rise to protests and troubles."[49] The French, with Soviet support, concluded,

> In spite of the fact that in many areas political conditions were hardly propitious to a frank expression of sentiments, wherever a check was made by the

> Commission, a great discrepancy was noted between the views expressed by representatives and those obtained in village interviews. The only exception is the area of Itala. That discrepancy appears to be a consequence of the fact that the influence of political parties was much stronger on the representatives than on the mass of the people. The statements of representatives cannot, therefore, be regarded as a rule as a true expression of the wishes of the population and can be accepted only in so far as they are confirmed by village interviews. If this is borne in mind, it appears that the great majority of the population would accept any government that would bring peace and security, that a number of them asked for the return of Italy and that the request for a Four Power Trusteeship for ten years does not correspond to a genuine desire of the tribes. In Mudug and Mijirtein provinces, where many chiefs and headmen claimed that their people supported that formula, the Commission was not in a position to check the authenticity of their statements.[50]

In contrast, the US and British delegates' observations were more moderate and balanced:

> From the views expressed by elected representatives and those obtained from individuals chosen at random, it is apparent that most of the territory is in favour of Four Power Trusteeship leading to independence in ten years. Those favouring this programme object to rule by any single Power, and especially by Italy. The strongest majority desire is for any Government chosen by the Four Powers which would guarantee peace and security. Areas expressing this view form islands in the larger areas supporting the majority view and tend to follow tribal lines. While most of the persons holding this view would favour or not object to the return of Italy, some voiced objections. In only a few areas was there any significant expression of sentiment with respect to individual powers. In Brava, and to a lesser extent in Itala, the sentiment was strongly pro-Italian. In the Lower Juba area it was strongly pro-British and more strongly anti-Italian. In places where people had been subjected to forced labour the sentiment with few exceptions was anti-Italian. Whenever the question was asked, objection was voiced against Ethiopian rule.[51]

The commissioners came to an impasse and referred the fate of former Italian Somaliland to the UN General Assembly, in accordance with the Paris Peace Treaty.[52] Subsequently, the General Assembly delegated the matter to the First Committee, which debated the issue in mid-1949.[53] There was general agreement in the UN's First Committee that the territory should be placed under a UN trusteeship to prepare it for independence. Italy was favored as the administering country by many in the West and their clients.[54] Ethiopia proposed that it administer the territory. Abdullahi Issa, the SYL's envoy in New York, feverishly lobbied against Italy.[55] Issa not only communicated with Mogadishu through telegrams but also went on the radio four times a week (stations WRNA, WRNI, and WOOC) in New York. The anti-Italian and anti-British broadcasts were

heard in Somalia.[56] He told his listeners that if Italy were given a mandate, the Somalis' fate would be like South Africans', where the whites dispossessed the Africans.[57] These anti-Italian and anti-British broadcasts rattled the British Military Administration, which sought to block them.[58] Issa did not spare his comrades either and criticized them for inertia.[59] In the meantime, two Conferenza delegates the Italians brought to New York endorsed the Italian agenda. Political realignment made it possible for Bevin and Carlo Sforza, the British and Italian foreign secretaries, to reach an agreement that stipulated Italy's role in the future of the territory. Subcommittee fifteen of the First Committee studied different proposals and recommended that former Italian Somaliland be administered by Italy as a UN trusteeship.[60] A more onerous proposal, which would have restored Italian rule without a trusteeship mandate, was defeated by one vote. Haiti's ambassador went against his government's directive and cast that momentous vote.[61] Issa cabled the SYL to inform it of this major defeat for the Italians. A Somali postal telegram operator received the message and immediately passed it to the party's leadership before the morning. The British Military Administration learned about the event later in the day through the BBC World Service and realized that the SYL had the information much earlier. The First Committee's recommendation was approved, with thirty-six countries supporting, seventeen opposing, and five abstaining.[62]

One of the features of the approved resolution was the establishment of a UN advisory council of representatives of three countries: Egypt, the Philippines, and Colombia. The function of the council was to oversee and advise the Italian administration. India and Pakistan were instrumental in inserting the role of the advisory council into the constitutional principles that governed the trusteeship order and insisted that the council maintain permanent offices in Mogadishu. This Pakistani-Indian foresight would well serve the SYL movement.

With a crowded schedule, the General Assembly tabled the Somali issue until the summer of 1949, and the SYL delegate needed to extend his visa to remain in the United States. The American authorities demanded that he deposit $500 in his account in New York. Issa pleaded with British authorities to allow him to transfer money from Mogadishu, but the British refused to grant his wish, and Issa could not remain in New York. He went to Canada, where Somalis in the United States, such as Jama Dirie, known as Abu Raas, who owned a small grocery store in Harlem, and Ismail Ahmed I-jeeh and his African American wife Kathy, who lived in Brooklyn, maintained him.[63]

Mindful of the need to present the Somali case to the world, the SYL's CC instructed Issa to remain, after returning from Canada, in New York, where he became a thorn in the side of the British and Italians.[64] Despite the British government's unwillingness to allow the SYL to send money to its envoy, Issa remained overseas until late in 1952 and continued to petition the UN.[65]



Abdirazak H. Hussen (seated left), Michael Mariano (seated right), and Somali supporters in New York, 1955. Courtesy of Abdirazak H. Hussen.

In anticipation of the UN's decision, the SYL CC wrote a moving letter to UN member countries, which is reproduced here in full:

September 11, 1949

Your Excellencies,

On the eve of the Fourth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nation's Organization, we, the Central Committee of the Somali Youth League, for and on behalf of the overwhelming majority of the population of Somalia, approach you all soliciting your support for our programme with which you are well acquainted.

We beseech you, in the name of Justice and Reason, to lend us a sympathetic hearing and to heed to our request for the betterment and progress of the Somali people. We state clearly and emphatically that we do not desire the return to the Italian Government in our country, and we are certain that our people will not acquiesce in Italian return to our soil, in any form or guise whatsoever. We have stated, over and over again, in our various memoranda to the Four Power Commission of Investigation and to the Secretariat of the UNO, the various reasons why we still maintain our objections to an Italian

> Administration in Somalia. The record of Italian misdeeds, crimes, tortures, massacres, racial discrimination and economic subjugation are only too vivid as we still suffer from the deep wounds occasioned by the 50 years of "civilization" undertaken in Somalia by the Italian Government and its great people.
>
> We beg you, therefore, to decide the future status of our country, not in the light of sordid bargaining, bickering and bartering but in the light of Justice to our wishes and desires. We urge you, in the name of Almighty God, not to hand us over to the beast from which we were freed at long last. [We hope you do not] fail us, but rather justify the confidence we place in you. Long live the United Nations' Organization.
>
> We remain,
> Your Excellencies,
> Your obedient servants.
>
> Members of the Central Committee of SYL.
>
Ahmed Addawe, Deputy President	Sheikh Mahamud Mohamed, Member
Abdul-Rashid Ali, Ag. Secretary	Osman Sheikh Mahow, Member
Sheikh Issa Mohamed, Treasurer	Sheikh Mohamed Osman, Member
Dahir Haji Osman, Member	Oslan Sheikh Osman, Member
Ali Maalin Mahamud, Member	Ali Herzi Farah, Member
Mohamed Ahmed Elmi, Member	Mahamud Yusuf Adan

Somalis anxiously followed UN deliberations, and leaders were devastated when Italy was declared the administrator of Somalia.[66] Somalis in various regions embarked on many demonstrations against the denial of their democratic rights. The public felt betrayed, and relations with British authorities soured quickly.[67] Several anti-British demonstrations took place across the country in which there was loss of life and others were jailed or internally exiled.[68] Abdullahi Issa reported British misconduct to the First Committee of the General Assembly:

> In our letter dated October 6th, 1949, we informed the Committee of the drastic action of the Military Administration in Somaliland. . . . The British . . . remain[] free to continue massacring the Somalis, arresting, convicting and deporting the Somali Chiefs and Sheikhs and banning the League branches in the interior. In spite of this, the committee has failed to intervene immediately in this serious matter.[69]

Reeling from the depressing news from New York, the SYL immediately convened a national meeting in Mogadishu.[70] The key question that most engaged the delegates was what could Somalis do now that the UN ignored their rights? This was an emotionally charged meeting, and many members passionately argued that the party should organize the people to fight against Italy's return to the country. Osman shared the prevailing sentiment but challenged the strategy many of his colleagues proposed.[71] He asked the delegates what resources

they would provide for the party to field a credible Somali force.[72] He warned that Somalia's landscape was not conducive to guerrilla warfare and that Italian troops would simply besiege major water wells, with devastating effects on the nomads. The delegates solicited Osman's views regarding the way forward for the party. He reminded them of the conditions stipulated in the trusteeship agreement, which provided for independence in ten years, for an advisory council to oversee whether the administering authority was fulfilling its agreements, and that Italy was obligated to develop the country and prepare it for independence. In other words, he insisted that a UN trusteeship would be qualitatively different from former fascist rule and therefore the SYL should cooperate with the administration as long as the latter fulfilled its trusteeship mandate. The conference accepted Osman's propositions, although many had little faith that the Italians would honor the trusteeship agreement.

The Trusteeship Period, 1950–1960

SYL versus the Fascists

On April 1, 1950, Britain handed over the territory to Italy.[73] It was not long after this transfer that the SYL's nightmare became reality. The first sign of the return of the prewar order was the recruitment of the senior Italian staff for the trusteeship administration from the old school, as a British diplomat observed,

> The Italian Officials who have come to Somalia, with the exception of the Chief Administrator and possibly a few others, are entirely Fascist minded; in fact they are all, with very few exceptions, old Colonial Servants who served under and for the Fascist regime.[74]

A Soviet newspaper went further:

> A solemn ceremony was recently enacted in Somaliland, not far from Mogadishu, in the presence of Fornari, head of the Italian administration, and general of carabinieri Ferrari. An old fascist banner of the Italian Colonial Corps, which had been buried in the ground, was disinterred and presented to the newly formed Somaliland Public Security Corps.[75]

Giovanni Fornari's first address did not do anything to soothe nationalist nerves, because he stated that Italy intended to reward those Somali allies that supported the restoration of Italian rule to the territory.[76] The SYL responded to the challenge by sending a lengthy letter to the UN advisory council:

> The good disposition of the Trusteeship Agreement have remained only on paper in that they could not defend the League and other . . . Somalis from the organized persecution to which they have been and are still subjected to

> in the hands of the same functionaries of yesterday when Somalia was a fascist colony, and in particular, Dr. Bernardelli at present Political Secretary of Somalia despite his superiors being aware of him as the organizer (before return of Italy here) and financier of the reactionary and anti-national parties of the "Conferenza" of which he is still the maintainer; . . . the AFIS [Amministrazione Fiduciaria Italiana della Somalia] has failed to do its duties towards the Somalis and Somalia.[77]

Mindful of the SYL's tenacious opposition to Italian rule, the administration moved swiftly to destroy the organization. The administration made a coordinated effort in all the major settlements of the territory to suppress nationalist resistance. It methodically dismissed most senior Somali employees of the British administration as it considered them to be loyal followers of the nationalist party,[78] and it strove to dismantle the SYL.[79]

One of the first joint attacks by Italians and their Somali followers on the SYL was in Baidoa soon after the Italians took over from the British.[80] Among the victims of the Italian terror was Abdirazak H. Hussen, who was the head of the post office in Baidoa.[81] The new governor of the Upper Juba valley, Copasso, was the former fascist administrator of the region, and his project was to create a favorable political landscape by delegitimizing the SYL to convince the UN to extend its tenure to thirty years. Hussen and his assistant were seen as strategic SYL agents by virtue of being members of the signal squadron. Hussen had his first confrontation with the Italian military police when one of them came to the post office and tried to enter an area designated for staff only. Hussen blocked him, an action that exasperated the officer, who promised retribution. Later, Hussen wrote a long letter, in English, to the district commissioner informing him of the incident. A day later, Hussen was summoned to the commissioner's house and questioned. The commissioner attempted to recruit him to work with the authorities as an agent, but Hussen declined the offer.

A few days later, the regional administration decided to push "non-Baidoa" Somalis out of town. Sympathetic locals leaked the cabal's intention, and Hussen and his colleagues sent a message to Mogadishu warning party leaders of the Italian plan. The SYL responded by forwarding a small amount of ammunition. Two nights later several Italian officers (including the commissioner and the military police) and one Somali came to Hussen's residence and told him they wanted to search the house for weapons. Hussen requested to see the search warrant, but the commissioner responded by stating that they were the authorities who issued the warrant. While this exchange was taking place, others from the Italian team slipped into the backyard and placed a bomb on the property. The search proceeded and ultimately discovered the planted bomb. Hussen was immediately handcuffed and taken out to be taught a lesson for challenging authority. The military police and two other uniformed Italians tortured him until he collapsed,

after which he was dumped in a prison cell. Fortunately Hussen's subordinate in the signal squadron reported events in Baidoa to SYL headquarters.[82] The SYL immediately reported the Baidoa brutalities to the UN trusteeship council and its representatives in the city.

Hussen did not realize he had internal bleeding as a result of the torture until the following morning, when he came down with a fever and could not eat the awful prison rations provided. No one checked on his condition until the fourth day, when a Somali prison inspector, Daud Abdulle Hersi, opened the cell door. Hersi was shocked by the condition of the inmate and asked him why there was so much blood in the cell. Inspector Hersi immediately went to the district commissioner and reported that the man in that cell was dying. The two returned to the cell, and the commissioner asked Hussen what had happened, but he ignored the question. The Somali inspector then went to the governor and told him about Hussen's condition. Disturbed by what he saw, the governor called his staff, including the commissioner, and inquired about what had happened. Everyone pretended that they did not know. An ambulance took Hussen to the hospital where the governor summoned an Italian doctor to examine Hussen.[83] After a quick examination of the prisoner, the doctor declared to the governor that the patient was fine and needed only a cough suppressant. A rough exchange between the two Italians ensued, and the doctor reprimanded the governor for acting as a physician. The governor agreed that he was not a medical expert but insisted that the diagnosis was very strange. Regardless of his political sentiments, the Somali policeman was deeply troubled by what the Italians had done to Hussen, and from here on the two became close friends.[84]

After two more months in the Baidoa prison authorities moved him and others to the central prison in the capital. Once in Mogadishu the political prisoners met others from various regions and their spirit was buoyed by camaraderie with colleagues and the support of the SYL women's group. Hussen began spitting blood because of his damaged lung and then developed tuberculosis. He was moved to the prison hospital. Nine months later the Italian authorities released all political prisoners. Hussen was not reinstated in his old job and had to fend for himself. He got employment at a Jewish-run company as a clerk. After three months he became ill again and was forced to quit. Assuming that the tuberculosis was terminal he decided to make one last nationalist effort by assassinating the Italian administrator, Belerdele, who was the chief strategist for the regime. Hussen borrowed a pistol from his cousin, but the administrator had already left for Italy on holiday.

Hussen's brothers came to the rescue and took him to their pastoral village to nurse him back to health. He was given traditional treatment for tuberculosis consisting of a substantial amount of clear ghee every morning, a full meal of roasted goat meat for lunch daily, and three cups of fresh camel milk as an

afternoon snack. He remained on this diet for six months, which had the intended effect. Within two months he gained much-needed weight and felt very well. Afterward, he moved to Galkayo, where he became an active member of the SYL branch.

Hussen established a public notary office in Galkayo to earn a living while doing the work of the party. Through his work with the party and his notary business Hussen became a key personality in the town. Meanwhile, the Egyptian member of the UN advisory group, Kamal Eddine Salah, came to Galkayo in 1953 and met Hussen. He was captivated by the young man's ability and immediately offered him a job. Hussen accepted the offer and joined Salah's staff in Mogadishu. He was given his own office and a good salary to boot. His duties were to go around the city and gather all types of relevant political information and organize appointments for his boss. Salah was exceptionally pleased with Hussen's performance and realized the young man had great potential.

Italian-imposed violence marred the territory. Baidoa, Mogadishu, Afgoi, Alula, Gilib, Golwen, Marka, Kismayo, and Janale were a few of the settlements where SYL supporters paid the ultimate price for demonstrating for freedom.[85] Beyond the brutality, the Italian agenda was to segregate Somalis into natives and foreigners to balkanize the territory into antagonist groups. The SYL envoy in New York laid out the administration's divide-and-rule strategy and how its behavior in Baidoa in 1950 was symptomatic of its entire agenda:

> The present tendency to set up within the Trust Territory of Somaliland three separate tribal States, namely, the Dighil and Mirifle State, the State of Hawiya and the State of Darot, is . . . alarming. During the examination of petitions from Somaliland by the Standing Committee on Petitions the representative of the Administering Authority mentioned several times the infiltration of foreign elements into the districts of Baidoa and of Merka. Obviously, the foreign elements referred to are the Somalis from other regions within the Trust Territory who reside in the districts of Baidoa and Merka, either temporarily or permanently.[86]

As the lengthy report of the Philippines member of the advisory council, Escudero Carpio, makes patently clear, the administration was attempting to accentuate tribal division among the population in order to undermine the SYL's civic project even in 1952:

> Tribal differences are being emphasized to prevent development of a sense of unity among the population of the Territory. It is for that reason that the Somali Youth League has espoused the idea that in any relation the question of tribes should never enter. And yet, in the first contact between Administration officials and any member of the Somali Youth League, in courts or any other proceedings, the first question that would be asked of the member of

> the Somali Youth League would be: "To what tribe do you belong?" . . . It is for this reason that, in order to accelerate the tempo of political development of the people, steps ought to be taken from now on . . . in order that, within the short remaining period . . . they may acquire that sense of oneness and responsibility as members of one nation. . . . But even if . . . the measures were taken, they would constitute no more than mere scratches on the surface unless other bolder and more vigorous initiatives were taken in the direction of creating an atmosphere that would make possible understanding, complete harmony and greater co-operation between the people and the Administration. I refer first to the cause of so many complaints, the innumerable imprisonments without trial, condemnation without as much as seeing a charge.[87]

The SYL maintained its nerve in the face of the unrelenting Italian aggression.[88] Its petitions continued to flood the advisory council in Mogadishu and the trusteeship council in New York. The Philippine and Egyptian[89] members of the advisory council supported the nationalist movement and submitted critical reports to the trusteeship council. This was in contrast to the Colombian delegate, who was sympathetic to the Italians. Ironically, one of the major voices at the trusteeship council during its annual meetings was the Soviet delegation, which caustically criticized the behavior and performance of the administration.[90] The SYL sustained the pressure by sending delegations to present its case at the annual meeting of the trusteeship council, and the administration brought its Somali supporter to vouch for its claims in 1953. Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden, "Zoppo," of HDMS went out of his way to portray the administration in a positive light:

> We know and we feel that we are children of the United Nations, and as such we wish to behave with true love for our parents, acting under the guidance of our tutor, Italy, to which you have entrusted us and which is devoting generous care to the achievement of our independence. . . . I do not know what political parties were referred to by the representatives of the Somali Youth League . . . as pro-Italian. . . . The difference between us and the other political group is not only do we avail ourselves of the guidance of the Administrating Authority, but that we consider it fair and useful to accept the benefits of the Administration. . . . I have the honour of speaking to the Trusteeship Council in the name of the following parties: the Hisbia Dighil and Mirifle;[91] . . . the Unione Africani della Somalia; the Lega Progressista Somalia; the Unione Nazionale Somala; the Unione Giovani Benadir; the Associazione Gioventu Abgal; and the Hidajet Islam Scidle and Mobilen.[92]

The image of the political conditions in the trust territory and the nature of Italian rule that Abdullahi Issa presented could not have been more different:

> The League's principal aim is the uniting of all Somalilands, now divided into five parts, and independence of a united Somaliland within the shortest possible time. . . . [A] large section of the politically-minded Somalis have publicly

> expressed their doubt that such a solemn decision will be successfully implemented within the time fixed. The main cause of the doubt and fear is the possibility that the Government of Italy might seek and easily obtain an extension of the period. . . . The Somali Youth League has submitted petitions concerning the political, economic, social and education problems of the Trust Territory of Somaliland. A number of these contain complaints of political persecution against members of the League, etc. These latter petitions were submitted at a time when the political temperature of the Territory was rather high. I have been informed that in recent months the temperature has dropped considerably and that the relations between the Italian Administration of the Territory and the Somali Youth League have improved. . . . [T]he leaders of the League have Instructed me officially not to press, during the current session of the Trusteeship Council, the complaints contained in some of the petitions which we submitted earlier. For the records of the Council, I wish to state that the specific complaints submitted by the Somali Youth League, particularly those concerning the serious incidents which took place in the Territory during 1951 and 1952, are based on facts.[93]

The cooling of the political temperature was brought about by the confluence of three factors that convinced the Italians they could not succeed in their attempts to break the nationalist spirit. The SYL resolutely refused to succumb in the face of Italian terror and unceasingly petitioned the advisory and the trusteeship councils by showing that the administration was not living up to its commitment under the trusteeship agreement. Further, Aden Abdulle Osman, the vice president of the territorial council and the SYL's leader, helped modify the party's attitude toward the administration. Previously when the CC received petitions from its branches critical of the administration, it would send them to the advisory council without bringing the complaints to the attention of the authorities.

Osman modified this strategy and often approached the administration to deal with the complaints. Only when the administration failed to do so did he let the CC send the petition to the advisory council and the trusteeship council. This shift in approach persuaded the Italian administrator to rethink his strategy of trying to break the will of the party.[94] In addition, the advisory council in the territory worked as it was intended by reporting on all developments that took place in the trust territory. Reports from two of three representatives in the advisory council in the trusteeship council gave credibility to the SYL's petitions. Finally, the Italians realized that they could not get what they wanted because they could not persuade the majority of the population to their side. Consequently, they approached the Egyptian representative on the advisory council to mediate between them and the SYL. Moderate elements of SYL leadership recognized the opportunity and seized the moment without reneging on the party's principles.

From Confrontation to Cooperation

Despite the common knowledge that the SYL had majority public support in the country, Fornari, the administrator of the territory, insisted in mid-1951 that "the parties of the Conferenza had more supporters than SYL" and allocated an equal number of representatives to the Conferenza and the SYL in the new territorial council.[95] The proportion of SYL representatives in the territorial council declined further when the size of the council was increased in 1953. The SYL had five representatives, while the pro-Italians had thirteen.[96] Whereas the administrating authority publicly insisted on the numerical superiority of its local supporters, the advisory council's reports painted a divergent reality:

> The political parties represented in the Territorial Council are classified by the Administering Authority as "progressive" [SYL] and "moderately progressive" [Conferenza] parties. [The SYL] still plays the role of opposition in the territory. The moderate progressives are the groups which favoured the return of Italy and are now commonly labeled as Pro-Italian. . . . These "Moderate Progressive" parties do not appear to be very active and their leadership in Mogadishu and throughout the territory does not seem to possess the same degree of initiative and organization as that of the SYL.[97]

The facts on the ground vindicated the latter's assessment of the territory's political conditions. By early 1953, the administration approached Salahdiin Faddel, the Egyptian representative in the advisory council, and complained that the resistance of the SYL prevented it from accomplishing its mandate.[98] It asked if he would mediate between the party and the administration. Faddel, who had excellent relations with SYL leaders, relayed the message to the party. The CC members resolved to work with the Italians as long as the latter were committed to fulfilling the mandate of the trusteeship council. Faddel brokered a compromise that both sides accepted in late 1953 and 1954. The new administrator of the territory, Enrico Anzillotti, took the agreement seriously and accordingly began to effect changes.[99]

The party was concerned about the possible negative reaction of its supporters to the agreement and therefore did not publicize it. Abdullahi Issa, the most senior party member, was disappointed with the compromise and made that known when he returned to Mogadishu in 1953.[100] He stayed away from CC meetings and did not get involved in party affairs, although he remained its secretary-general. There was unease among the party ranks when they discovered the compromise. The search for a design for a national flag took the public's mind off the compromise. Osman, SYL president, suggested that the territorial council solicit flag proposals from the public. Mohamed Awale Liban tendered a design of a white star centered on a blue background. His proposal was unanimously

accepted, and the flag was immediately hoisted in public places in Mogadishu and across the country.

The first major political event after the agreement was municipal elections that took place March 28, 1954, in thirty-five municipalities.[101] These were the first elections of their type in the history of the territory, and all male adults over the age of twenty-one were eligible. The parties competed for 281 seats, and the SYL was victorious with 141 seats, vindicating its nationalist claims. HDMS, its closest rival, won only 57 seats.[102]

Two other related events during the year reinforced the sense that a new chapter in the territory's political history was unfolding. The administration promoted four Somalis to the post of vice president in the municipalities of Dinsor, Wanle Weyne, Eil, and Bur Hakaba, and the territorial council selected the presidents of the two leading parties, SYL and HDMS (Aden Abdulle Osman and Abdi Nur Hussein), to represent the territory in the trusteeship council's annual meeting in New York. The two presidents agreed to submit a joint statement to the trusteeship council.[103]

Although the SYL was cooperating with the administration, it continued to advance its nationalist agenda. The SYL president told the trusteeship council that his party did not share the administration's electoral strategy in the rural areas of the territory. Responding to a question from a member of the trusteeship council,

> [Osman said that] while the Administering Authority considered elections by the shirs [tribal village meetings] as effective as direct election would be among the nomadic population, he shared the view of many that, with careful preparation, direct election could be successful, even in the bush. Experience had shown that the people's elected representatives performed their duties faithfully and well, and while any decision to develop the Territorial Council must rest with the Administering Authority, it was the wish of the people that the Council should speedily become a fully legislative assembly.[104]

Despite improvements in SYL and administration relations, the Italians seemed not to have given up hope that the forthcoming territory-wide legislative assembly election would endorse pro-Italian parties.[105] Clear evidence of this wish was the favor the Italians extended to the representative of HDMS, Abdulkadir Zoppo, when he traveled to New York to participate in the 1955 trusteeship council meeting. The SYL's Abdirazak H. Hussen also traveled to the same UN meeting. The Italian government funded the cost of the HDMS delegate, while the SYL emissary had to subsist on the meager allowance ($1,000) the party provided. Zoppo and Hussen were ordered by their seniors to submit a joint report to the council. Zoppo presented the petition, and Hussen answered most of the questions.[106] The tension between the SYL and the administration would remain until the UN fixed the trust territory's exact day of independence.

Triumphant SYL and the Formation of a Somali Government

The first territorial election for a legislative assembly took place in 1956. Several Somali parties competed for sixty seats. Table 4.1 provides the distribution of votes and seats.

The electoral results shattered whatever illusions the Italians had about rural Somalis voting for the pro-Italian parties. Anzillotti, the Italian administrator, conceded defeat and tried to put the best interpretation on the failure of its allies:

> The Council's attention focused on the very important developments which had recently taken place. . . . The elections for the Legislative Assembly . . . had taken place calmly and the results had been a fairly accurate representation. The assembly had opened on 30 April 1956.[107]

The tenure of the elected deputies was three years. In spite of the new freedoms and responsibilities, the legislative assembly's authority was circumscribed because its decisions had to be sanctioned by the Italian administrator for the first year. Further, assembly members could not introduce legislation without the administrator's approval.[108]

The SYL felt vindicated and, despite latent suspicions about Italian intentions, the final push toward independence commenced. The party convened a national congress in which all regional secretaries participated. The aim of the meeting was to set the policies that would guide the new Somali government. Once general policy matters were dealt with the convention turned its attention to the emotional issue of how to deal with the pro-Italian parties and individuals who staffed the administration. Many members were keenly aware of the administration's discrimination against SYL members when hiring and the public's deep resentment against pro-Italian parties and their supporters. Many were of the opinion that it was high time to get even with these parties and their people.

Table 4.1 Election results for the legislative assembly, 1956

Party	Votes for	Seats
SYL	333,820	43
HDMS	159,961	13
SDU	80,866	3
Ex-Benadiria	21,630	0
Marehaan Union	11,358	1
Others	726	0

Note: SYL, Somali Youth League; HDMS, Hizbia Digil Mirifle Somali; SDU, Somali Democratic Union.

The wise men of the party, led by Osman, prevailed and impressed on their colleagues that this was not the time for revenge but an opportunity to prepare the country for independence. The leaders underscored that the country could not afford to waste time and energy on destructive retribution since other means existed to dismiss incompetent employees, who were predominately pro-Italian. SYL leadership was emphatic that the party must embark on a new chapter true to its fundamental principles.

The victors moved forward, and the first step for the legislative assembly was to elect officers. It chose Aden Abdulle Osman, the SYL leader, as Speaker of the assembly. He immediately relinquished his party leadership, and Abdirazak H. Hussen (who did not run in the election because the list of party candidates was submitted before he returned from New York) was chosen to replace him. Anzillotti nominated Abdullahi Issa as prime minister and asked him to form Somalia's first internal self-government. Issa had a difficult time convincing the most literate of the assembly members to join his cabinet. They were reluctant because they did not feel they had the competency and experience to manage public affairs and did not want to humiliate themselves in public. After much cajoling they consented to serve. The five ministers were Haji Musa Boqor (Interior minister), Haji Farah Ali Omer (minister of Economic Affairs), Sheikh Ali Jimale (minister of Social Affairs), Salaad Abdi Mohamoud (minister of Finance), and Mohamoud Abdi Nur (Juujo) (minister of Labor and General Affairs). The administrator retained three portfolios (foreign affairs, defense, and external trade).

The new government was accountable to the legislative assembly. Policy issues were first discussed in the cabinet and then submitted to the assembly as a motion. If the legislature passed the motion, then it went to the administrator for authorization.[109] Each Somali minister worked with an Italian advisor, whose presumed responsibility was to guide and train the minister.[110] These advisory positions were abolished at the end of the year.

The Somali government and assembly largely performed well for the first year of their tenure, despite having to deal with several difficult problems. First, the trusteeship council's 1956 annual report reiterated and underscored Somalis' concerns about the lack of a demarcated boundary with Ethiopia and the British transfer of the Haud and Reserved Area to Ethiopia in 1954. Somali leaders were keenly aware of the long-term consequences of the boundary problem for the new country, as the Speaker of the legislative assembly emphasized in his remarks to the trusteeship council in 1956:

> One problem of great concern to the Somali people was that of the frontiers with Ethiopia. Despite the praiseworthy endeavours of Italy and Ethiopia, the problem had still not been resolved and there seemed no hope of future improvement. It would be extremely regrettable if Somaliland, at the beginning of its life as an independent State, had to tackle such a complex problem; it

> was essential, therefore, to fall back without further delay on mediation and arbitration, as recommended in General Assembly resolution 392 (V), adopted in 1950. Somaliland hoped to entertain cordial relations with Ethiopia, and the resolution of that [boundary] problem would eliminate a source of possible misunderstandings.[111]

Second, the Egyptian representative in the advisory council, Kamal Eddine Salah, was stabbed to death in his office in Mogadishu on April 16, 1957.[112] The assassin was captured but claimed that he was motivated by personal vengeance, although many suspected that he acted on the instructions of one of the local parties.[113] Third, not long after Somali ministers took up their portfolios, the Interior minister, Haji Musa Boqor, without the approval of the cabinet, appointed Haji Musa Samantar, his cousin who was pro-Italian and pro-Ethiopian, as director of prisons.[114] Although the prime minister considered the minister's action an affront, he did not reverse the appointment or reprimand the minister. Such unilateral ministerial actions and reactions from the prime minister would punctuate national affairs for several years.

As with many liberation movements, the SYL had to shift from opposing the colonial government to governing the country while sustaining the organization's agenda. The first year unfolded smoothly as the government moved forward with its agenda of training a Somali civil service cadre and planning its development agenda.[115] The Somalization of the civil service was moving at an acceptable rate, and the performance of the Somalis recruited to it was satisfactory.[116] Despite the progress, the public's expectations for expanded employment and other services were not met. Many party supporters and others moved to Mogadishu to try their luck with the new dispensation, but few found employment. Their frustration fueled rumors that the few who were employed, and particularly the ministers and members of the legislative assembly, had attained the good life. Further, those seeking employment or handouts congregated around ministries headed by men from their region. This phenomenon was interpreted to mean that ministries were allocated along clan lines. Hussen, the president of the SYL, was inundated with complaints from party supporters and recognized the potential long-term damage of the rumors. He convened a cabinet meeting to impress on the ministers the corrosive effects of rumors on public trust and urged them to discredit the rumors. Unfortunately, the cabinet members did not appreciate the urgency.

The cabinet's obliviousness to the importance of public opinion was in part attributable to the limited political experience of most of its leaders. For example, four of the ministers had never worked in an office and therefore had no managerial know-how. The gulf between the ministers' experience and the daunting challenge of building national institutions in an environment of deep poverty and high illiteracy was compounded by discord within the party and government.



Sheikh Ali Jimale, Abdullahi Issa, and Abdirazak H. Hussen, 1959. Courtesy of Abdirazak H. Hussen.

Dissension in 1957 between cabinet ministers illustrates the ease with which the accumulated and precious nationalist social capital could be destroyed.[117] Sheikh Ali Jimale (minister of Social Affairs) and Mohamoud Abdi Nur (minister of Labor and General Affairs) accused Haji Musa Boqor of abusing the discretionary fund of the Ministry of Interior by supporting political rivals, while Haji Musa Boqor charged Sheikh Ali Jimale with using his ministry's significant employment opportunities to give preferential treatment to his kinsmen. The acrimony within the cabinet was well known to SYL members, the CC, and much of the public in Mogadishu. Further, the conflict fueled rumors that cast the conflict in tribal terms, endangering one of the SYL's foundational principles. Investigation revealed that the allegations against each minister were false. But accusation and counteraccusation took on a life of their own and created an unproductive climate within the cabinet.

The climate of discord enveloped the government and the party when the SYL's annual congress was convened in May 1957. The delegates were split into three groups with differing agendas. Members whose districts had representation in the cabinet supported the government, while delegates from areas without ministers felt alienated. The latter group was reinforced by conservatives who were offended by the prime minister's suggestion that the Somali language should be transliterated to the Latin alphabet.[118] This group was supported by

the Egyptian envoy, who lobbied for Arabic. In contrast, a moderate group that backed the government was critical of the government's internal squabbles and the lack of cabinet leadership. SYL president Hussen, frustrated by cabinet members' disregard for public opinion, resigned and informed the CC that he was no longer a candidate for the top party leadership. Hussen's resignation generated competition between the two camps for the SYL presidency. The campaign ended with the reelection of a former party president, Haji Mohamed Hussein, who was still in Egypt, with Aden Abdulle Osman as vice president.

Party Crisis and the Emergence of Democratic Leadership

Three major crises confronted the party and its leadership between 1957 and 1960, and Osman played a critical role in defusing them as a mediator within the SYL and between it and the opposition parties and as a moderate voice of the party, thinker, and nationalist leader. All three problems were provoked by senior members of the party straying from the SYL's fundamental principles. These crises were conflict among cabinet members, a contest between the opposition and the SYL over electoral deadline, and a tussle between the prime minister and his critics.

Leadership Crisis

The SYL's biggest crisis since its establishment was the mismatch between the militant nationalist strategy of its president, Haji Mohamed Hussein, and its CC, which saw its task as guiding the country toward independence, set for 1960. Haji Mohamed had been studying in Egypt since 1950 and was unaware of the progressive changes that had taken place in the administration of the country brought about by the relentless struggle of the party. Unappreciative of the sacrifices of his colleagues, Haji Mohamed embarked on a radical activism that troubled most of the party's stalwart activists and leaders. He criticized the very Somali government led by the SYL and lambasted it as a colonial stooge.[119] Party leaders cautioned Haji Mohamed that he could not advocate a political agenda different from the party's and that he should respect the party's position as its president. He refused to heed the plea, encouraged the masses to challenge the administration, and urged plantation workers and others to rise against the Italian yoke. Haji Mohamed believed that the party's rank and file and its field leaders shared his approach to independence. Consequently, he demanded that the CC convene a national congress. Members of the CC were also eager to have the party conference because they thought that such a forum would be the appropriate occasion to rein in the president as well as resolve conflicts within the cabinet.

The CC selected a committee, led by the Galkayo branch secretary,[120] to manage the conference. The SYL congress assembled in March 1958 and lasted for three months—the longest in party history. An agenda consisting of four major

items was put forward. These were party policy, the election and electoral law, how to redress the government's budget deficit, and the formation of a national army despite Italian misgivings.

Shortly after deliberations began members of the assembly endeavored to introduce electoral redistricting, which had been resolved in an earlier period. Haji Mohamed was incensed by this attempt and walked out of the meetings. He organized a demonstration against the party and said that the party had ceased to be a liberation movement and that Somali nationalists should spill blood for independence rather than accept independence sanctioned by the colonialists. Conference participants were enraged by this behavior and recognized that the party could not survive if its president behaved so cavalierly. Accordingly, the matter was debated on the same day, and conferees decided to remove Haji Mohamed from the presidency and revoke his membership in the CC, but they gave him the opportunity to appeal their decision. Haji Mohamed ignored the disciplinary measures imposed on him and took his seat at the head table in the congress hall the following morning as if he were still the SYL's president. The chairman of the congress told him that he no longer belonged to the party's leadership and should take his seat among the other members.[121] The SYL's point man in this affair was its vice president, Osman. Members of the Benadiria branch of the party petitioned to reinstate the former president, but the rest of the party was not so lenient, advising Haji Mohamed to appeal the decision for the party to reconsider it. Haji Mohamed never appealed the SYL's decision and left the party for good.

> On 22 May . . . the central committee of the League decided to expel the president, Haji Mohamed Hussein, for engaging in political activity characterized by bitter and violent propaganda and for going so far as to encourage acts of intimidation against the party's own congress.[122]

Two months later he announced the formation of a new party, the Greater Somali League. A not insignificant number of SYL members from the rank and file shifted their loyalty to the new party, but all key personalities remained in the SYL.

Once the presidential issue was dealt with, Osman and a few party members proposed that the current CC membership should resign as a group to make room for a new team. Many CC members resisted this proposal, and it took sustained pressure to dislodge them. Hussen was one of the members selected to oversee the election of a new party leadership. Osman was nominated for the party presidency, but he refused to accept it because he felt that he had enough responsibility being the parliament Speaker. Further, he did not want party members to misinterpret his lead role in the Haji Mohamed affair as a power struggle for the top party post. He pleaded with members not to impose the party's presidency on him because he saw it as possibly undermining party unity. Congress

participants ignored his request, supported his nomination, and elected him. Osman responded that he could not accept the vote and demanded that there should be a second ballot to give others a chance to compete for the post. A second secret ballot was conducted, and Osman was again elected.

Toward the end of the conference, a few members proposed that the forthcoming assembly election should be postponed, since the territory lacked the necessary population census for a legitimate election. The new party president and many others opposed the motion because they believed that other former colonies, such as India and Nigeria, had had free and fair elections in the absence of a national census.[123]

Conflict within and with Opposition Parties

As the 1959 assembly election approached, competition among major political parties and between members within each party heated up. The first step in the electoral process was for parties to register their ranked candidate lists in each district. The SYL had its lists ready, but the opposition was not as prepared. Haji Musa Boqor, the Interior minister, informed the Speaker of the assembly that the opposition parties (former pro-Italian parties, which Osman dubbed the Devil's Pact) would boycott the election because the government would not accept open and fair competition. Concerned about the political impact[124] of a boycott, Osman urged the prime minister to instruct all district authorities to facilitate matters by enabling opposition parties to register their lists. A few days later, on January 8, 1959, Abdulkadir Zoppo, the leader of HDMS, confirmed the boycott by claiming that district authorities were blocking the opposition from registering and demanded that the deadline for registration be extended. The trusteeship's advisory council proposed to the prime minister and assembly Speaker a five-day extension of the deadline to give the opposition a chance to submit their lists. SYL leadership considered the proposal and suggested a three-day extension.[125]

Unmoved by the counterproposals, the opposition demanded a postponement of one month. A day later, one of the opposition parties, Liberale, broke ranks with the Devil's Pact and decided to put its lists forward wherever it could. Two days later, HDMS declared its intention to participate in the election, followed by the Greater Somali League (GSL). Moderates in the ruling party convinced their colleagues to do everything legally possible to facilitate matters for Liberale and HDMS to register as many of their lists as possible. HDMS's and Liberale's defection isolated the Greater Somali League by leaving it alone, which was the SYL's main concern.[126]

Dealing with the Devil's Pact was not the only problem the SYL had to deal with. Internal struggles among SYL candidates unfolded, and three of these stood out. One of the strangest contests emerged in Mogadishu between the CC and the

local branch of the party. The local branch's favorite candidate was Ahmed Dahir Hassan, a resident of Mogadishu and an active member of the SYL, while the CC nominated Sheikh Issa Mohamed, a Mogadishu native who had been the SYL's treasurer since it was established. Some of the local branch members accused the CC of tribalism because it supported a townsman against an "outsider." This problem was resolved in favor of the "outsider." A similar issue arose in Belet Weyne, where Sheikh Ali Jimale put his name on the top of the list, followed by Osman, despite the latter holding the presidencies of the party and the assembly. Sheikh Ali and his friends had accused Osman and Haji Farah Ali Omer of not favoring their kin group in party disputes. Leading area elders were present at the meeting at which the accusation was made and at which Osman offered to retire. These elders and many others came to Osman's defense and reversed the rank order of the SYL list.

Similarly, in the northeast region, Haji Musa Boqor headed the SYL lists in two constituencies, Alula and Isku Shuban, which were strong SYL districts. Haji Musa's cousin was second on the list in Isku Shuban, making many SYL leaders concerned about clan favoritism. The party secretary in Alula, unrelated to the minister, was second on the party list there. SYL's CC asked Haji Musa to stand only for the Isku Shuban district, but he demanded to remain on both lists, which the party reluctantly accepted to avoid another schism in the party. Haji Musa delayed his decision until after the election, when he chose the Alula seat,[127] and Haji Musa's cousin, Haji Musa Samantar, took Isku Shuban's parliamentary seat.[128]

Yet another such case was that of Abdirazak H. Hussen. He appeared second on the SYL list in Eil, after a former pro-Italian named Ahmed Aegaag. The rationale of the local party branch ranking was that Aegaag's clan was more dominant in the district capital. Initially, Hussen resisted accepting this order, but others prevailed on him because the SYL was assured of victory since other parties were not competing for the two seats.

Ministerial Unaccountability

The activities of the Greater Somali League and the unilateral actions of the minister of Interior brought another challenge to the party. Disturbances took place in the northeastern town of Gardo, an SYL stronghold, involving the GSL and its president, Haji Mohamed Hussein, and his associates. They were arrested and transferred to prison in Mogadishu. GSL supporters distributed flyers in the capital urging the public to protest Haji Mohamed's arrest. Violence followed the demonstration, and the mayor of Mogadishu, Ahmed Suqul, was stabbed as he tried to disperse the crowd.[129] In another incident a bomb was thrown at Azzan restaurant in the center of the city and an Italian was assaulted. The police

arrested more than 280 people, including over 100 women and the entire leadership of the GSL. Several days later, the minister of Interior reported to Osman that the police had arrested in Jamama a GSL member carrying hand grenades. The prisoner confessed that the munitions were given to him by league leaders who asked him to terrorize settlers in Lower Juba.[130] These violent disturbances led the police to close GSL headquarters on February 26, 1959.

Two months after the election, the minister of Interior, Haji Musa Boqor, unilaterally and unexpectedly ordered the GSL and Benadiria party offices reopened. The assembly Speaker found out about the minister's order and reported it to the party's CC, which charged him with informing the prime minister.[131] Abdullahi Issa summoned the minister but failed to convince him of the inappropriateness of his action. The prime minister asked Osman to join a committee and explain to the minister why his action was inappropriate. The committee met with Haji Musa, and Osman called on Haji Musa, in the presence of another minister, Haji Farah, to submit his resignation. The Speaker of the assembly counseled him that this was the wisest course of action and would safeguard the SYL's integrity and government. Haji Musa accepted responsibility for his action and indicated his willingness to resign but said he would not until the cabinet explained why he could not reopen the two party offices. Osman reported these developments to the CC, and the group agreed to wait.[132]

In the meantime, the Italian deputy administrator summoned Osman and told him that he did not want to accept the minister's resignation because the term of the current government would expire in a few days. Shortly thereafter, a group of CC members approached Osman with the suggestion that the CC should not insist on the minister's resignation.[133]

The stalemate created by the prime minister's insistence that the minister resign and Haji Musa's recalcitrance was resolved by the intervention of three senior party members, Haji Farah, Salaad Abdi, and Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee. The three CC members told the president they had a strategy to resolve the crisis but did not tell him that they had assured the minister that the prime minister would not accept his resignation. Haji Musa submitted his resignation letter to the three mediators and Osman, who knew of the mediators' assurance to Haji Musa. The mediators, in Osman's presence, called the prime minister to tell him that they had the letter of resignation and appealed to him to reject it after he received it. The prime minister inquired if they had promised the minister that his offer would be refused. The mediators' response was not candid, and Osman realized that his colleagues were not being truthful. A day later, the prime minister met with Salaad Abdi and Haji Farah in Osman's office and told them that he would resign if they insisted on Haji Musa remaining in the cabinet. The following day, the same group met in Osman's house, and the prime minister explained how important it was for the government to steadfastly confront the GSL's recent

illegitimate challenges[134] and that it was important to remove Haji Musa from the cabinet since he refused to accept instructions. Osman suggested that prime minister meet with the minister and ask him to accept another portfolio, but in the end the prime minister accepted the minister's resignation. He informed Osman that an announcement pertaining to the resignation would be published in the local newspaper the following day. Osman convinced the prime minister to delay the announcement, since Italian Deputy Administrator Franco (in the absence of the administrator) had the final authority.[135]

The crisis took a new turn after one of the mediators, Finance Minister Salaad Abdi, tried to resign. He was annoyed with the prime minister for accepting Haji Musa's resignation, and Sharmarkee[136] and some of the minister's kinsmen were pressuring him to resign. The prime minister demanded that Deputy Administrator Franco publish the rejection of Salaad's resignation to defuse the crisis. Franco sought the advice of Osman, who told him that he would need to consult with the CC. The CC apologized to the deputy administrator for the prime minister's behavior and asked him to accept Haji Musa's resignation and reject Salaad Abdi's request. The deputy administrator acted accordingly, and the conflict was resolved.[137]

Postelection Government Crisis

The results of the assembly election were announced on March 11, 1959, and the SYL was victorious, claiming eighty-three of the ninety assembly seats. The SYL dominated the election partly because some opposition parties boycotted the election and HDMS and Liberale fielded candidates in only a small number of districts. Further, SYL candidates ran unopposed in many districts because other parties did not have the organizational capacity or resources to even register their candidates. HDMS, the main opposition party, was confined to Upper Juba, and even there the SYL had the edge.[138] Despite the undisputed success of the SYL, results were annulled at Lugh Ferrandi because of voting irregularities. HDMS's candidate was murdered before the election, and the results seemed doctored. Kismayo was another place where some irregularities had occurred, although one candidate, named Shaacir, who was from the local community, won despite the odds against him. Nearly all the leaders of the governing party were thrilled with these results, but the SYL's president would have preferred a narrower margin of victory and a stronger opposition.[139]

The party then turned its attention to the task of forming a new government. In the past, the SYL had convened a party congress to pick its leaders and set the agenda for the new government. Given the acrimony that had developed in the previous national conference and continued disputes in party ranks, some CC members were hesitant to endorse such a convention. However, Osman was the

driving force behind the idea, as he thought that confining the meeting to the CC and assembly members would send the wrong message to district party secretaries. Osman insisted that branch secretaries were vital members and should not be made to think that they were exploited when the party needed them to persuade constituencies and shunned when it was time to set party policies.[140] After a series of discussions, on March 25, 1959, the CC met and voted against holding a party congress.[141] On the following day, Osman resigned as party president since his proposal had been rejected. Mogadishu buzzed with rumors about the president's resignation, and many of his critics reveled in his departure. Osman captured the mood and the intent of the affair in his diary:

> There are a lot of comments in the city pertaining to my resignation. Many are happy about it while others are not so inclined. Many on both sides of this divide are not motivated by genuine desire to improve the future of the country or promote national cohesion among Somalis. I am baffled with these divisions, as it was not my intention to please some and antagonize others. My only wish was not to be responsible for a decision that would offend branch secretaries and consequently create new splits in the party. Meanwhile, the majority who voted against convening a party congress are not taking any measures to prepare those excluded from the congress to accept the CC's decision. Instead, they are spending their energy in soiling my image among certain groups.[142]

Osman's unanticipated resignation stunned those opposed to a party congress. After a number of meetings, the CC rejected the resignation. The party secretary reported the CC's decision to Osman, who retorted that he was not asking for permission to resign and that the only way his mind could be changed was if the CC reversed its decision.[143] The CC had another set of discussions in response to Osman's challenge and concluded that it would correspond with branch secretaries to ascertain the conditions under which a congress should be held. When the assembly Speaker learned about the turn of events he told the party secretary and two other CC members that he was no longer interested in continuing the discussion.[144] Several more fruitless attempts were made to convince him to withdraw his resignation. On April 22, the CC reversed its earlier decision and agreed to convene a congress with all branch secretaries represented. In a public rally held the next day, Osman told supporters that the crisis had been resolved and impressed on them that all leaders should be ready to resign when their ideas are voted down.

The congress convened on May 17, and the SYL's president was elected to chair the meeting. He was given the authority to select the committee that would coordinate the conference agenda. Osman appointed Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee, Mohamed Sheikh Gabiou, Haji Salah Jama (Karshi), Sheikh Mohamed Isaaq

Salaad, and the secretaries of Jilib and Bur Hakaba. Another committee was charged to prepare a list of candidates for the various positions and CC membership. Participants made two more decisions: the new government that the SYL would form would be a coalition government, and a technical committee would be set up to update the SYL constitution. Once the ground rules were established, jostling for positions overtook congressional deliberations. Hussen observed three competing camps for the prime minister's post: "Many Darods do not want Abdullahi as premier (some openly say so), and the Hawiye is divided, while the Mai Mai, which is likely to be influenced by Juje [Mohamoud Abdi Nur] who feels unsure of retaining his ministerial post if the PM is not re-elected, will support Abdullahi."[145]

The congress turned to choosing government and party officers. The first contest was for the Speaker of the assembly. Osman garnered 66 of the 125 votes cast. Abdullahi Issa came second with 38 votes, followed by Mohamed Sheikh Gabiou with 13 votes. This was followed by the selection of the prime minister. Abdullahi Issa was the clear winner with 68 votes, followed by Osman with 52 votes, and 1 vote for Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee; 4 were voided. Osman was relieved at the outcome of the party election:

> I am greatly relieved as it would have been embarrassing if I gained a majority for the premiership. The most serious difficulty would have been how to deal with some ministers of the outgoing cabinet, who in the past three years put themselves in positions to be hated by the Darod or the Hawiye. It would have been advisable to keep them out of the cabinet, although they would resent their marginalization. Thank God it is the responsibility of the prime minister to deal with them.[146]

Another issue that worried the assembly Speaker was increased corruption in senior political circles. He hoped that the new government would have an effective strategy to deal with the problem. The SYL's selection of candidates was reconfirmed in the assembly, as Osman won seventy-six votes out of the possible eighty-seven. Two deputy Speakers, Abdulkadir Zoppo and Haji Bashir Ismail, were also elected.

Finally, the congress turned to choosing the party's central committee. The SYL's branch secretaries proposed that the elected president alone should have the authority to select the remaining eighteen members of the CC. After a lengthy debate the motion passed, but the result was not clear. The vote was challenged and the party president called for a second ballot. He ordered those in favor of and those opposed to the old motion to stand on opposite sides of the chamber. The result was fifty votes in favor and forty-six opposed, with six abstentions. Some of the branch secretaries, among them Haji Salah Jama (Karshi) of Galkayo and Ahmed Aw Muse from Eil were upset and left the meeting in

protest. Those opposed to the proposition refused to acknowledge the results of the second round. Osman put forward a compromise motion that required the elected president to nominate as many as forty-six candidates from which the congress would elect eighteen CC members. All but four participants voted in favor of the compromise motion. As the delegates got ready to vote for president, Osman declared that he was not interested in the post. Subsequently, Sheikh Issa Mohamed, SYL treasurer since its establishment, was elected by a majority, and Osman prayed for him.[147] Four days later, CC members were elected. These were Mohamed Elmi Sahal, Ali Haji Farah, Osman Sheikh Mao, Ali Maalin Mohamed, Mohamed Ossoble Aleyo, Hassan Barre Tohow, Haji Abdisamad, Abdirazak Haji Hussen, Mohamed Haji Sabrie, Nur Hashi Alas, Abdirahman Haji Mumin, Mohamed Ibrahim Abukar, Sheikh Mohamed Isaaq Salaad, Hersi Khaire, and Abdi Dahir Farah. Although Osman was first on the list that the new president submitted, he came in nineteenth in the election and therefore was no longer a member of the CC.

The final act of the assembly before a new government could be formed was to select assembly offices. Osman lamented that the divisive acts of assembly and cabinet members were putting national aspiration in jeopardy:

> Life is beautiful, and it is quite true that man is the most beautiful, but also the most complicated, of all creatures. We have created the Somali Youth League; for it we have made all sorts of sacrifices to see the Somalis united and independent from foreign servitude, and now that we are on the verge of being completely free, we risk spoiling everything with our actions that are dictated by factional egotism. . . . [T]he election of the remaining five members of the office foreseen by the existing laws demonstrated the irresponsibility of certain people who decide in factional conspiracies outside the parliament, although they know that the net result of their action will divide and deepen the differences among the people. They elected the deputy whip and the secretaries, persons from the Digil Mirifle bloc who have taken the Hawiye identity, going to the length of giving one more member in the office of the presidency to the [HDMS], which has only five members in parliament, and electing as secretary an illiterate. No position was given to those they call "Darod."[148]

The unprincipled struggles over positions in parliament foreshadowed the last major political crisis during the trusteeship period. The prime minister proposed enlarging the cabinet to nine ministers and five undersecretaries. Osman noted in his diary that skilled and more educated people were left out of the cabinet because political expediency and tribalism guided the process:

> Many ambitious individuals are disappointed, among whom is Omer Hassan, already undersecretary of justices, who expected to be become a minister. Others include Ali Hagare, Mohamed Ossoble Adde, and also the poor [Kutubahor], former undersecretary at the PM office, who was sacked because

> Abdullahi and his friends who cannot tolerate criticism were fed up with him. In general, Abdullahi put in place his so-called supporters, disregarding any opportunity in the interest of the country and the prestige of SYL. The choice is based on tribalism, and ability and integrity were not taken into consideration.[149]

Osman offered three reasons for the marginalization of SYL principles. First, the prime minister and his associates were intolerant of those members of the cabinet who were critical of certain ideas and policies. Second, many ambitious members of parliament and ministers were attached to the material benefits that came with cabinet posts, and none of them were willing to accept a lower standard of living. Osman indicated that the reason he deliberately refused to live in a government house or accept services of personnel paid for by the government was precisely to avoid getting used to such seductive privileges.[150] Third, the prime minister was unwilling to stem clanist logic, which contravened one of the SYL's foundational principles.

Abdullahi Issa was cognizant of the disturbing impression his choice of ministers had created. Consequently, he attempted to mollify those offended by his inexplicable rationale of leaving out of the cabinet two of the most educated SYL members of parliament, Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee and Mohamed Sheikh Gabiou. He offered to take the two as his advisors on foreign and economic affairs, but both rejected the offers.

Many members of the party were disappointed with the prime minister's choice of individuals and the size of his cabinet. A group of thirteen SYL members of parliament, led by Nur Hashi Alas, Abdirazak H. Hussen, Mohamed Ossoble Adde, Abdirashid Ali, and Mohamed Gabiou challenged the prime minister. They wrote a petition critical of the government to the Italian administrator, Mario Di Stefano. The group asked Osman to deliver the petition to the administrator and get an appointment for them. Osman rejected the request and advised them to use the party and parliamentary mechanisms to deal with the controversy. The rebels refused to heed this counsel as they felt that they did not have enough support in parliament to undo the prime minister's choices. Osman reported the matter to the SYL leader, Sheikh Issa, and also asked the administrator not to approve the list of ministers until he met with the petitioners. Osman shared the dissidents' criticism of Abdullahi Issa, but he felt that their strategy was reckless.[151]

The CC met and discussed the petition of the thirteen members of parliament. Without deliberating on the merits of the group's criticism of the government, the CC chastised the critics. Such unconsidered action reinforced the attitude of many critics who deemed the CC "domesticated."[152] Abdullahi Issa seemed unconcerned by these developments and informed the administrator

that he would resign if his government was not approved by the assembly.[153] The administrator met the critics, but he did not take them seriously and noted that he was "proud to be Sicilian,"[154] implying that he supported the prime minister's clan-based formula since tribalism is a reality.

Offended by the administrator's response, the critics decided to appeal to the trusteeship council and the Italian government. They sought to telegraph their petition to the council, but the telegraph officer demanded that all named petitioners must personally confirm their signatures.[155] Sharmarkee told the Speaker of parliament that a copy of the telegram would be sent to him. Osman responded that it was pointless to provide a copy of the telegram as the group had not seen fit to consult with him before dispatching the petitions. The critics' telegram also infuriated Di Stefano, who summoned Osman to an urgent meeting. Di Stefano complained about the opposition's telegram without realizing that he could have prevented it by taking the matter seriously when the group approached him. Finally, Di Stefano solicited Osman's advice on what could be done to settle the crisis.[156]

The prime minister approached Osman after hearing that he had spoken with the dissidents. The prime minister subtly urged Osman to dissuade the critics from pursuing their course of action. Osman's deep disenchantment with all the parties boiled over:

> I told him that I did not intend to advise anybody unless they request it, that I would have spoken with these men if they had consulted with me and would have tried to dissuade them. I told him that I do not want to get involved. I ask myself why Abdullahi expects others to do what is in his interest when he very well knows that he totally ignored the advice of those whom he would like to help. Inept he, Abdullahi, inept the administrator, and inept the dissidents who went too far in sending telegrams abroad with the evident danger of discrediting the future of our country on the eve of independence and who lost the confidence of others who would have supported them in a vote of no confidence to the government. I do not know why everyone must expect that I could somehow do something about it. . . . I hope the chaos stops at the telegrams, that the dissidents will calm down having vented their emotions, and that the other sides do not promote a disciplinary action by the CC against the critics.[157]

The sense of balance and maturity that Osman sought eluded the government, the critics, and the CC. The prime minister ordered that the government-provided car be withdrawn from Hussen and that he be removed as the head of two national organs (Somali Credit Institute and Higher Education Institute). When Osman heard about it, he went directly to the prime minister for confirmation of the information about Hussen's car. A few days later, Mohamoud Mohamed Kutubahor, another of the critics, was discharged as president of the

SYL's parliamentary group.[158] Shaken by the crisis, the government was eager to gain support in the assembly and proposed a motion that would allow the vote of confidence to be a voice vote rather than a secret ballot. When Osman directly asked the prime minister to clarify his stand on the motion, the latter responded by claiming that a voice vote was the standard in many parts of the world. Osman was dismayed by Abdullahi Issa's action and tried to convince the government to withdraw the motion in order to reduce the tension between it and the opposition.[159] Finally, the CC responded to the critics by wiring its own telegram to the trusteeship council denouncing the opposition, and the critics responded by making more denunciations. The Speaker of the assembly noted that everyone was going mad when the CC expelled the critics from the party.[160]

The trusteeship council invited the dissidents and the CC to send delegations to its meeting in July. Although the government already had a delegation of nine people in New York, the CC decided to send a second delegation, composed of Abdullahi Insaniyeh and Ali Mohamed Hirabe. Opposition members delegated Hussen and Kutubahor to represent it. Before the delegation left, Mohamed Ossoble Adde, one of the dissidents, confronted the assembly Speaker to make his position about the crisis known. Adde assumed that Osman supported one side, but he was sobered by the Speaker's blunt response:

> I told him that I like neither what Abdullahi Issa did in forming the government nor the extremism of his group. I have limited my involvement in the matter since no one sought my advice. It would be a shame for the party and for Somalia to see two SYL delegates opposing each other in New York. [I told him:] I urge you to be mindful of the country's interest, whose independence might be jeopardized by your actions.[161]

As the crisis dragged on, a number of concerned deputies, such as Ugey Yassin Abdurahman, Abdullahi Mohamed Ismail, Haji Bashir Ismail, Ibrahim Osman Abuker (Haji Unlaie), and Haji Yusuf Egal approached Osman to form a mediation committee to deal with the problem. Osman summoned the group and sixteen others to gain the CC's support for their agenda. In the meantime, the CC acceded to Osman's request that he be allowed to draft a letter on its behalf to the critics asking them to refrain from moving forward with their agenda. The mediators spoke to two of the critics, informing them that their criticism was not unwarranted but that their action might force a split in the SYL, which was not in the country's best interest. However, this plea failed to change the dissidents' minds.

Three Somali delegations met in New York, two of which were critical of the government: SYL critics and those representing the opposition parties. The opposition political parties came to plead with the trusteeship council to nullify recent Somali elections because of fraud.[162] In contrast, Hussen ably[163] presented

the critics' case and forcefully argued against the use of tribalism as a criterion for selecting the Somali cabinet:

> The emphasis being given to tribal representation would mean that the numerous tribal and subtribal groups would demand posts at the cabinet and under-secretary levels. As a result, the number of posts would have to be increased substantially and the attention and efforts of the ministers and under-secretaries concerned would be focused on the narrow interests of small ethnic groups rather than on the national interest. The present excessive number of ministers . . . would entail expenditure on a scale beyond the resources of the budget. It would increase Somaliland's need for foreign financial aid and consequently hinder the attainment of economic self-sufficiency. . . . [T]he appointment of insufficiently qualified persons as ministers and under-secretaries is contrary to the interests of the Somali community.[164]

The dissidents' dignified performance at the UN and their ability to stay clear of statements or actions damaging to the country's independence helped the mediator's task. Soon after the delegation returned to Mogadishu, Osman and his mediators were able to defuse the crisis, and the expelled members were reinstated.

Rising Corruption

Another challenge that preoccupied the attention of some party and assembly leaders was the growing corruption in the ranks of parliament, government, and public service. Malfeasance and preferential treatment given to Italians and their supporters was fundamental to the Italian colonial administration. In contrast, the party's vital objectives were to eliminate these prejudices and to protect the rights of all citizens regardless of their identity. Further, the party and its supporters were so grieved by the illegitimate and private appropriation of collective resources by colonial masters that it set out to build Somali institutions that would reverse these practices. Establishing such institutions and a political culture that would uphold the SYL's lofty principles was an ambitious goal. To realize such hopes required an elite group that believed in that ethos and had the will to strive for its attainment.

The SYL was not well prepared to undertake such a monumental responsibility, given the low education and general poverty of the population. The only asset at its disposal was the common heritage of the population. Unfortunately, one element in Somali culture, genealogical division, could be manipulated to undermine social cohesion of the people. The politicization of genealogy was already under way as the colonial authorities divided the Somali community into various subject groups. Successfully challenging this legacy required an organization and leadership committed to such an agenda. Despite the goodwill and sacrifice of many, certain elements within the party could not resist the

temptation of exploiting their authority for individual gain or the pressure to favor clients. Containing, if not disenfranchising, those in the party inclined this way meant that a majority of other members and particularly the leaders had to remain faithful to the organization's principles.

Several interrelated misuses of authority were apparent after the return of the Italian administration in 1950. The first sign that vigilance and discipline were needed to safeguard the integrity of the nationalist project occurred in that fateful year. SYL supporters whose property was ransacked in Baidoa appealed for restitution. Informed sources reported that what little compensation the party received did not fully go to the dispossessed mainly because of mismanagement.[165] A second manifestation of abuse surfaced when a member of the CC proposed that the party or government should give financial grants to members of the parliament who lost their assembly seats in the election.[166] Although the proposal was turned down, it indicated that some senior members of the nationalist party either did not understand that public money could not be used to compensate members of any given party or thought that the ruling party could bend the rules to reward its senior members. The third type of corruption was the use of state authority to gain privileged access to public property. There were three expressions of this rent-seeking behavior. First was politicians' misuse of credit from the Somali Credit Institute, which was intended to support small farmers and home ownership for civil servants. Both of these privileges were abused as larger farmers gained access to farm credit and as new property owners rented their houses to expatriates, contrary to the terms of the loans.[167] Second, some politicians and senior civil servants who were not entitled to a banana quota, which was specifically earmarked for Somali farmers to break the Italian monopoly on banana exports, gained access to this opportunity. Since a number of senior politicians received banana quotas, elements in the civil service assumed it was legal and applied for their share. In one graphic instance, a senior police officer applied to the assembly for a grant for a banana export quota. Osman came across the application and wrote the following entry in his diary:

> I gave to the commander of the police, Mohamed Abshir,[168] an application his colleague, Major . . . , addressed to the secretariat of the assembly for an allocation of banana quota as if he were a farmer or a businessman! God is the greatest! This shows how low our conscience has sunk. Naturally, this gentleman has seen ministers and civil servants who have obtained a banana quota allocation and assumed this was lawful.[169]

Osman was even less forgiving in his remarks at the end of December when he realized the depth of corruption:

> December is over, and so is the year 1959, which was decisive for our country and continent. . . . In parliament discontent is smoldering against the

> government, a proof of which are the "snipers." Sniping is the action of cowards and can be curtailed with a minimum of effort if the government speaks clearly to members of the parliament and at the same time be willing to work for the moralization of the public administration. Many deputies, in fact, do not want anything for themselves, but would like the PM to shrug off his culpable leniency toward the immorality of his colleagues and the civil servants. On December 30, I told Osman Ahmed Roble, who brought a message from the PM, that the latter should postpone his motion pertaining to the draft law on the constituent assembly to another day as I have concerns about the integrity of even [top people]. [Some of the latter have obtained an allocation of banana quota,][170] which I consider illegal, as the law stipulates that it is forbidden for ministers to conduct business activities and profit from decisions under their jurisdiction.[171]

Third, a few politicians and civil servants illegally acquired foreign currency destined for legitimate holders of import-export licenses. A notable number of SYL members and some leaders became associated with these scandals.

It seems that enough SYL members who despised the rush toward corruption were disinclined to openly debate the issue in the assembly or in the party's gatherings. Sharmarkee's view that many members of the CC and the parliamentary group were "domesticated" aptly described the situation. Illiteracy among the population and the absence of vibrant civic organizations that could educate the public made the dangers and harm of corruption invisible.

The Nationalist Movement and Unification of Two Somalilands

Somalis have dominated the peninsula for millennia, and consequently the population developed cultural, linguistic, religious, and economic norms. In spite of this common heritage, Somalis did not establish a united political entity. The absence of such political institutions in part facilitated the nation's division into five European and African colonial fiefdoms overseen by France, Italy, Britain, and Ethiopia. Moreover, internal genealogical differences made it possible for the European colonial powers to sign separate treaties with each genealogical group, thus transforming cultural relations into political instruments.[172] The Amhara Empire in Ethiopia captured Somali territory without signing agreements with any Somali group.[173]

The nationalist founders of the SYL understood the major contradiction in Somali identity. On the one hand, Somalis shared common values that uniquely brought them together, and on the other hand, their underdevelopment created internal segmentation that barred their collective advancement. Mindful of this conundrum, they thought it was possible to capitalize on the common values and significantly tame, if not eliminate, the politically divisive tendency of genealogical segmentation. The SYL's two constitutional pillars of uniting and liberating all Somalis within the peninsula and building a collective political identity based

on common citizenship were revolutionary ideas at the time whose wisdom is yet to be realized.

Somalis from all corners of their territory began to comprehend the prospect of the SYL's dream as a result of the fortuitous defeat of Italy and the consequent British occupation of four of the five Somali regions in 1941. Britain's triumph in the Horn of Africa provided an opportunity for Somalis to collectively think about their destiny. Discussion among the four powers regarding the fate of former Italian colonies catapulted the SYL into action. The party organized a pan-Somali conference in Mogadishu in 1947 for Somalis to forge a common agenda about their future. Community leaders came from all corners and adopted the SYL's nationalist principles. Somalis from the British protectorate were among the strongest supporters of the conference agenda as articulated in two separate venues. First, Mohamoud Jama Urdooh, the chairman of the leading political party in the protectorate, the Somali National League (SNL), left no doubt about his party's aspirations:

> The Somali National League and the Somali Youth League, which represent approximately 90% of the Somali people inhabiting [British, French, former Italian, and Ethiopian Somali territories, are] of the firm opinion that . . . the Somali people at present divided by British, French, Ethiopian, and Ex-Italian frontiers should be united in one Somali Nation with a unified political, cultural, and economic system. Such a system, we are convinced, can only be suitably set up and effectively maintained by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations, by means of a joint administration, composed of the Four Big Powers. We are resolutely opposed to the present system whereby our present and future welfare is left in the hands of single powers.[174]

Community leaders from the protectorate were even more categorical in endorsing the national project emanating from the Mogadishu conference:

> We, the undersigned Somalis . . . of Somaliland Protectorate[,] have the honor to state that the praiseworthy discussion taking place at the conference being held in Europe by the United Nations Organization regarding the future of Somali territories ha[s] aroused considerable interest amongst the Somali tribes, whose desires we have the honor to express herein with the humble request that they be conveyed to the United Nations Organization. We unanimously and strongly desire the amalgamation of the following four Somali territories, the inhabitants of which speak the same language, belong to the same religion and are similar in their general outlook, mode of living and customs: Ogaden territory; the territory presently known as Somalia; the territory presently known as the Somaliland Protectorate; all that part of Ethiopia in which the majority of the inhabitants are and have, from time immemorial, been Somalis. We also unanimously request that the above mentioned amalgamated Somali territories be placed under British trusteeship for a period of fifteen years, provided that we receive the following assurances.[175]

The nationalist spirit suffered a major setback with the reimposition of Italian rule on Southern Somalia and the return of Somali territories to Ethiopia in the mid-1950s. Although the SYL became preoccupied with its struggles against the brutal Italian rule in the early 1950s, it sought to resolve the boundary question between Ethiopia and the UN trusteeship, and expressed the gravity of this dispute for Somalis at UN forums.[176] Despite the reversals, the refragmentation of the Somalilands did not kill Somalis' hope for reunification and their nationalist dream. The SYL remained as the principal voice of the project at the UN in 1953.[177] Informal exchanges continued between Somalis under different colonial regimes. Three political events—in 1954, 1956, and 1958—impelled Somalis to openly take up the unity challenge. The first reanimation of nationalist sentiment came with the transfer of the Haud and the Reserved Area from Britain to Ethiopia in 1954. Demonstrations broke out in the British protectorate and in the trusteeship denouncing Britain's betrayal of the Somalis.[178] Two years later, a Somali administration led by the SYL was born in the trusteeship. It inspired Somalis everywhere and offered leadership to the movement.[179] However, the SYL government, confined to domestic affairs and economically poor, could offer other Somalis only moral backing and symbolic political support.

The third momentous event was the challenge posed to colonial rule in French Somaliland. The French administration rigged the referendum in 1957, and this galvanized the liberation movement in the territory. Key leaders of the independence movement, Mohamoud Harbi, Ahmed Qumane, and Ali Udun, fled harsh French prosecution and went to Mogadishu, where they were guests of the SYL government.[180]

A little over a year after the formation of the SYL government, contacts between Northern and Southern Somalis became public and began with the SNL's visit to Mogadishu in December 1958. SNL leaders and leaders from French Somaliland proposed a pan-Somali conference to be held in Mogadishu.[181] The SYL and the other two Somali parties agreed to hold the conference after the spring election in Mogadishu. The SNL also offered to mediate the conflict between the SYL and opposition political parties.[182]

Somali leaders in the protectorate and in Mogadishu assumed that the unification of the two territories would take place immediately after independence. Not so coincidentally, the British colonial secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd, who was visiting Hargeisa, announced that the United Kingdom was ready to grant independence to the protectorate and had no objections to the unification of the Somali territories.[183] The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported that Ethiopia submitted a formal protest letter to the British government concerning the minister's statement on Somali unification.[184] The SYL and the British government immediately responded to the Ethiopian initiative and sent letters of protest to the Ethiopian emperor and to the secretary-general of the UN and

the Afro-Asian People's Conference in Cairo.[185] The Ethiopian envoy in Mogadishu came to see Osman to convince him that his government's position was misunderstood, but he never denied the thrust of the BBC report. Evidence from public records in the United Kingdom show Ethiopia's determination to block Somali unification,[186] and its clearly stated intention to absorb all Somali territories into its empire. According to a British report, the Ethiopian emperor in a policy speech in 1956 stated his plans for Somali territory:

> The Emperor has made a policy statement at Gabredarre which reveals beyond further doubt his real aims towards the Somali and the Horn of Africa. In spite of obvious embarrassment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it now seems clear that wide publicity was deliberately intended. His reference to economic links of Somalia with Ethiopia and implication that federation on the lines of Eritrea was the solution was not lost on the Somalis present at the meeting and coldly received by them according to independent reports that have reached us. . . . This speech merely confirms what I have always maintained, that Ethiopian practice in the territories reflected a centrally directed policy. It seems obvious that the immediate effect of this policy is to achieve full control over our tribes, in order to facilitate the next step of undermining our position in the Protectorate. This step may well be a claim for reciprocity under the 1954 agreement. The ultimate aim is, to extend the Ethiopian empire over the whole Horn of Africa.[187]

The Ethiopian government maintained its resistance to Somali independence and unification. Further, it brought diplomatic pressure to bear to allow it to open a consulate in Hargeisa, but this was one of the rare Ethiopian demands the British resisted.[188]

Despite Ethiopia's designs for Somalia, correspondence between Somali parties was moving apace, necessitating that the British governor of the protectorate, Douglass Hall, and his consul general visit Mogadishu in September 1959. SYL leaders asked the governor about his government's policy toward a united Somalia outside the commonwealth. Hall responded that the United Kingdom would not have any problem with other Somali regions joining Somalia provided that the other countries involved approved.[189]

Two months later, an official delegation led by Osman visited the British protectorate to deepen the conversation on unification.[190] One of the key issues in the deputation's mandate was to get a clear message from the leaders and the people of the protectorate with regard to unification. A huge crowd that included nearly all protectorate leaders greeted Osman and his party when their plane landed in Hargeisa. The crowd was very large and the visitors did not have time to speak to many well-wishers. The SNL hosted a dinner for them on the first night, and the Southern visitors were introduced to a large number of community leaders. The delegation met with other political parties and found that the SYL branch

in Hargeisa was inert and isolated from other parties. They also heard from Michael Mariano, who favorably compared the SNL with the GSL and registered his unhappiness with the SYL's visiting leaders because their organization had not helped his party as much as he had assisted them in earlier years.[191]

The delegation was impressed with a number of things they saw in the protectorate. Among these were the superior workings of the legislative council, the good organization of the police force, and the orderliness of schools in Amoud. Hargeisa's population and political leaders orchestrated a moving farewell for the delegation, which left no doubt about the people's deep desire for and commitment to unification. The huge crowds at the airport chanted, "Let Somalia unite" and "Somali ha noolato." Osman noted in his diary, "We can without doubt state that those brothers seriously want to be united with us."[192]

Five weeks later, a protectorate mission consisting of two groups came to Mogadishu to continue the work on unification. The first group consisted of four legislative councilors, Michael Mariano, Mohamoud Hussein Buh, Abdullahi Ali, and Hersi Madadaal. The second group included Aboker Haji Farah, Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, Ahmed Haji Dualeh (of the SNL), Rashid Abdullahi Sultan, Ahmed Gulaid Jimale (of the National United Front [NUF]), Mohamed Salah China (of the SYL), Mohamed Haji Hashi (from Somali Ethiopia), and the young secretary of United Somali Party (USP). Exiled leaders from French Somaliland joined the latter group.[193]

Soon after returning from Mogadishu, protectorate leaders cabled a telegram to London on November 6, 1959, demanding unification with the trusteeship territory.[194] Although the protectorate administration declared its intent to speed up the pace toward self-government, it still assumed that the earliest date for independence would be 1962. Sensing British inertia, the freely elected members of the protectorate legislative assembly approved a motion that called for independence and unification on July 1, 1960.[195] A few days later, the National Assembly in Mogadishu passed a similar motion. The leaders of the two territories met in Mogadishu on April 16 and made a joint statement affirming the actions of the two assemblies. The British were concerned about the pace of events and had a difficult choice to make. They entertained the possibility of rejecting the wishes of the legislative assembly but knew that they would be confronted with massive resistance. This would have required bringing in British troops to keep order since they were not confident that they could rely on Somali troops to enforce their commands.[196]

> When we arrived it was clear that the extremist party . . . SNL, had succeeded in whipping up considerable following. . . . During my first two days I visited the principal towns in the Protectorate, and the extent of SNL control was shown by the way in which they organized quite large crowds to sit down with

> their backs to me as we passed through. I held meetings with political leaders and tribal elders in these towns and although the SNL put their demands in a more offensive manner, it was clear there was considerable unanimity between almost all sections of opinion in demanding very substantial constitutional advance . . . to enable them to have the chance of joining up with Somalia by the end of 1960 when that territory became independent.[197]

Britain finally agreed to the demands of the protectorate and began the process of disengagement. Throughout this period, the British authorities were concerned about the effect of union on their interests, particularly given the negative reaction of Ethiopia and France. They made extra efforts to reassure these two regional allies, and that set the stage for future developments in the Horn.

The pace of decolonization in Northern Somalia went at a breakneck speed because of the people's wishes and inspired by the more developed movement in the UN Trusteeship Territory. Political developments in the South had progressed more methodically because the terms of the trusteeship mandated independence in 1960. Self-government came to the South in 1956. As a result, Southern Somalis gained more experience in the art of governance than their protectorate counterparts. Northern leaders recognized this handicap but had faith in the union. Their concerns were driven by their commitment to national unity and by the aggressive expansionist proclivities of Ethiopia.[198] Consequently, they agreed to accept the political system that developed in the trust territory.

The draft constitution had been under formulation since mid-1957 in Mogadishu. A technical committee consisting of Italian and UN experts produced a draft constitution and submitted a charter consisting of 141 articles, accompanied by a 316-page commentary, in May 1959.[199] A Somali political committee of fifty individuals examined the document and endorsed a revised version that had 64 articles.[200] The Constituent Assembly, consisting of all assembly members and twenty other leading Somalis, examined and debated both versions and fashioned a draft constitution with 100 articles.

While the debates on the constitution were taking place in Mogadishu, the legislative assembly in Hargeisa passed a motion demanding the unification of the two Somali territories. Shortly thereafter, Northern and Southern participants in the pan-Somali conference held in Mogadishu agreed to form a united country. Paolo Contini, a member of the technical committee on the constitution and a keen observer of the process, described the agreement as follows:

> The decision to form a union was reached at a conference of Northern and Southern Somali leaders held in Mogadishu [Pan-Somali Conference] between April 16 and 22, 1960. A joint communiqué issued at the end of the conference announced it had agreed that the two territories would be united on July 1, 1960; the new Somali Republic would be a unitary, democratic and

> parliamentary State; the legislative bodies of the two territories would be merged into a National Assembly which would be set up "in order to investigate and propose convenient solutions to the problems connected with the administrative, financial and judicial systems now in force in the two territories"; the United Nations would be asked "to supply experts who may help in accelerating the integration of the two territories."[201]

With the strategic agreement on the principle of unification accomplished, the draft constitution was handed over to the visiting Northern delegation. It was asked to take the document back to Hargeisa and for the legislative assembly[202] to alter it as necessary. After some consideration, protectorate leaders proposed the addition of two new articles to the draft document. These contributions dealt with public employees and mandated the creation of an independent civil service commission. They were incorporated into the draft constitution as articles 88 and 89. On June 21, 1960, the Constituent Assembly adopted the constitution by acclamation.[203]

A frantic process of preparing the protectorate for independence was in high gear by spring of 1960. A delegation of key Northern leaders went to London to finalize the negotiations with the British government. Two members from the



Abdullahi Issa and Aden A. Osman with the Italian governor Mario Di Stefano, 1960. Courtesy of the family of President Osman.

trusteeship leadership, Zoppo and Muro,[204] joined the process as observers. The negotiations were concluded, and the protectorate's independence date was set for June 26, 1960. On the eve of independence, a trusteeship delegation led by assembly Speaker Osman went to Hargeisa to join in the festivities.[205]

Conclusion

Within a period of fifteen years, Somalia experienced a gigantic political transformation. Some of these changes were from the postwar shift in world affairs and others were induced by the determined struggle and initiative of the Somali people led by the SYL. Somali resistance to European colonial rule had been somewhat dormant since the defeat of Somalia's modern national leader, Sayyid Mohamed Abdille Hassan, in 1921. However, the defeat of Italian fascism by Britain in northeast Africa in 1940 provided an opportunity for Somalis to wake up again and think of their destiny as free people. The British occupation of four Somali lands—the former Italian colony, the British protectorate, Northern Frontier Districts, and Somali Ethiopia—created an occasion for Somali nationalists to recognize the silver lining that the defeat of Italy brought about: a Somali union. While the major war of resistance against colonialism in the first two decades of the century was based in the British protectorate, the seeds of the second wave of resistance sprouted in Mogadishu, which became the hub of the nationalist movement. The SYL became the engine of liberation and strove to mobilize the population through civic principles anchored in their shared values. Transforming those values into a progressively growing social capital and embedding them in national institutions were the plans of the nationalist party.[206]

When the four-powers commission failed to agree on the fate of the Somali territories, a new and difficult chapter of Somali history began. The British proposal to keep all the territories united under its aegis was thwarted by France and the USSR. Ultimately, the case was sent back to the UN, which supported Italy's return to Southern Somalia. Shortly thereafter, the British handed over western Somaliland to Ethiopia while retaining the protectorate. Such colonial gerrymandering of Somali territory took place against the vocal and determined resistance of Somalis. Retrospectively, one wonders, if the Somali people and their lands had not been treated as pawns in this colonial and Cold War exercise and if the UN and the four-powers commission had agreed to the Bevin plan, whether the horrific catastrophes that befell the Somali people in the next fifty years would have happened.

The rise of the SYL as a democratic liberation party created sufficient spaces for the emergence of democratic leadership, which in turn reinforced the party's civic nationalist character. The SYL and its leadership not only tamed Italian colonial excesses but collaborated with the leaders of other Somali territories to

forge the unification of the first Somali colonies into a united and democratic Somali Republic. There has been a belief among Somalis that the unification was driven by overzealous protectorate nationalists and that Southern Somalis were reluctant collaborators. The evidence-based analysis presented here unambiguously establishes that the union of the two Somalilands was a joint project driven by the desires of Somalis in the two colonies.

While the SYL was successful in reversing some of the damage and helped realize Somali hopes for a political union, the party was not successful in remaining internally united. It appears that two political tendencies emerged within the party in particular and Somali politics in general. The first tendency had deep civic and nationalist roots and was the force behind all the progressive political developments during the 1950s. Key personalities among the civics were Aden Abdulle Osman, Abdirazak H. Hussen, and Abdullahi Issa Mohamoud. The second tendency was toward sectarianism and opportunism, and it was mainly driven by the desire for personal gain through the exploitation of public power. Those associated with this tendency did not have a prominent leader who stood out on the national stage during this period.

The Somali liberation movement had unique democratic features, almost unlike any other in the African continent. The SYL as the leading liberation movement started its journey as a consensus-based party and over time developed into an open democratic institution without an armed wing. This quality partly reflected precolonial Somali tradition of equality but also echoed the reality of the emerging postcolonial world. Another major feature of the movement was the absence of an overbearing leader who was considered indispensable for liberation. Osman and the group around him who led the SYL were as devoted to independence as any other African leader; however, they believed that the democratic process was the essence of liberation and consequently practiced it. The combination of these two qualities set Somalia apart from other African nations and gave the country a chance to deepen its democracy after independence.

5 The First Republic

Institutional Foundations of Democracy, 1960–1964

June 26 and July 1, 1960, marked the realization of two of the SYL's visionary principles of a free and united Somalia, as the former British and Italian Somalilands amalgamated to form a unitary and democratic republic. The SYL's principles, articulated in the early 1940s, went beyond union and the termination of colonialism. They called for mutual support among Somalis to build an inclusive country in which all citizens had equal rights. The creation of the Somali Republic provided the foundation stone for establishing national institutions and public culture that would nurture those fundamental values. Despite the promise that freedom ushered in, the nation faced many towering difficulties on its pathway to becoming an institutionalized democratic republic. The three most daunting challenges the republic encountered were the inheritance of two contrasting colonial systems of government, which required reform and integration; a general incapacity induced by an impoverished population of which more than 90 percent were illiterate; and a lumpen elite, most of whose members did not understand how modern democratic institutions worked or the centrality of building a public sphere that was autonomous from sectarian political projects.

In this context, the most important and immediate challenge of the republic in its first phase was how to transform the aspiration of the Somali people for freedom and unity into functioning democratic institutions. A most decisive instrument for meeting such a daunting transformation was the quality of political leadership in parliament and senior members of the government. This chapter examines the efforts made during the first republic to maintain the constitutional separation of responsibilities between the three branches of government—the division of power between the head of state, the prime minister and his cabinet, and parliament—and most centrally the efforts made by President Osman to ensure that the ruling-party government lived by the law of the land.

Institutional Foundations of the Republic

Evidence from history shows that the vast majority of Somalis, including politicians, sincerely accepted the ideals of unity and independence propounded by

the Somali Youth League and its associates. The people of the former British protectorate (the North), demonstrated their commitment to this ideal by pushing their political leaders to undertake what was necessary to make Somali unity feasible.[1] Despite the wishes of the people of the North and the articulated agenda of the SYL in the trusteeship territory (the South), some key members of the political elite in the North assumed that the South was less interested in the political unity of the Somali people and felt that they had to force this issue on the South. The Northern leaders were surprised at what they found once they reached Mogadishu:

> It was apparently the intention of the British Somaliland delegation before it arrived in Mogadishu on April 15, to demand complete integration of the two territories and elections for a combined National Assembly after July 1, 1960. According to a member of the British Somaliland delegation, the Protectorate leaders had expected resistance on both counts from the GOS (Government of Somalia), and had laid plans to appeal to the Somalia populace over the heads of the GOS and combine with the Somali opposition parties to bring about the downfall of the GOS. However, they were so taken aback by the GOS' immediate acceptance of total integration of the two territories that they decided to cooperate fully with the GOS and withdraw their demands for immediate elections. According to a British source in touch with the leader of the Protectorate delegation, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, the two sides to the union talks decided to postpone elections for three years after July 1, 1960, and in the meantime integrate the 33-man Protectorate Legislative Council with the 90-man Somalia Legislative Assembly.[2]

Unlike the political leaders of the North, Abdullahi Issa, the prime minister in Mogadishu, went on record March 1, 1959, predicting the unification of the two Somalilands, some time before the Northern delegation came to Mogadishu.[3] The Northern assumption that Southern Somalis were less enthusiastic about unification is a stubborn myth among the population in both the North and the South. It is as if the Northern leaders accepted the propaganda of the Southern opposition parties that the SYL was not a nationalist party. But the public's commitment to the union was so total that no politician dared to slow the movement toward its realization.

In contrast to the devoted commitment to unification of Somalis in the two territories, the imperial government of Ethiopia was deeply unhappy about the implications such an outcome would have for the Somali territories it controlled. Consequently, it made its disapproval of the union known to the British government and even tried to convince the Soviet Union to use its veto power to block Somalia's admission into the UN.[4] A Northern Somali delegation, led by Egal, who was poorly informed about Ethiopia's intentions, went to Addis Ababa and naively proposed to talk to the emperor about the Haud and Reserved Area. The imperial government made it clear to the group that this issue was off the table.[5]

As the British protectorate's independence approached, a delegation led by the president of the trusteeship assembly, Osman, visited Hargeisa to take part in the celebration. In the meantime, some of the senior administrative cadre of the North and members of the legislative assembly left for Mogadishu to prepare the ground for the union. The celebrations in Hargeisa and throughout Somali communities in the Horn of Africa went well as the blue flag festooned with a white star of the new republic was hoisted in the northern region of the Somali Republic. Abdillahi Sultan Timaade, the leading nationalist poet from the small farming town of Gabileh, crafted an epic poem about the demise of colonial indignity, the rebirth of liberty, and the imperatives for responsible leadership and civic life:[6]

Ilaahaan waxba seegine,	Allah the omnipresent
Subiciisa Quraankiyo,	who pronounced everything in the Quran
Sabbaxooyin ku sheegayow,	
Saciira iyo Naciima,	
Rabbigii kala seerayow,	The Creator who differentiated Saciira from Naciima
Markay Suurtu dhawaaqdee,	When the last call is made
La soo saaro makhluuqa,	And all creation is resurrected
Shaqiga iyo saciidka,	And you [Allah] segregate the good from evil
Maalintaad kala soocdo,	
Dembigaanu samaynay,	
Rabbigayow naga saamax,	God forgive our misdeeds
Subciyayoo ka dukeeyaye,	
Sowd kaleetona waa,	
Soomaaloo calan taagta,	Hail the rise of Somalis' sovereign flag
Saakay nogu horreyso,	
In sidayda tihiin iyo,	I wonder if you people share my buoyed spirit and thoughts
In kalaanan saxayne,	
Saddex wiig iyo maalmo,	My soul is feasting and even a three weeks' fast
Haddaan soor cuni waayo,	will not induce hunger that can injure my spirit
Safrad layga ma yaaboo,	
Sarina meyso naftayda e,	
Saaxirkii kala guurraye,	We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,	May our flag forever stay aloft
Aan siduu yahay eego e',	Let me have a full view of our flag
Kaana sib kanna saar,	Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours
Ka-siddeetan sabaan,	

Calankaanu sugeynaye,	The flag we yearned for
Sahankiisa ahaynow,	And sought
Seerma-weydo hillaacdayow,	Is like the lightning of early spring
Sagal manta darroorayoo,	With thunderous downpours
Siigadii naga maydhayow,	That cleansed the winter dust from the air
Saq-dhexaanu ahayne,	We were in midnight darkness
Kii soo saaray cadceeddow,	But you dawned freedom's light
Samada kii u ekaayee,	You are the blue sky with a heavenly star as a gift
Xiddiga mid la siiyayow,	
Saaxirkii kala guurraye,	We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,	May you forever stay aloft
Aan siduu yahay eego e',	Let me have a clear view of ours
Kaana sib kanna saar,	Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours
Saalixiinta Islaamku,	Pious Muslims clandestinely sighted you
Sirta kay ku arkeenow,	
Saahidiinta Quaraanka,	
Subcisaa Jimcayaashiyo,	foretold by devoted Friday Quran
Sibyaanta iyo haweenku,	reciters and women and children is our precious flag
Calankay sahadsheenoow,	
Cidina kaanay na siinnine,	You are not a gift from anyone except Allah
Saatir noogu yaboohayow,	
Saaxirkii kala guurraye,	We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,	May you forever stay aloft
Aan siduu yahay eego e',	Let me have a full view of ours
Kaana sib kanna saar,	Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours
San-ku-neefle dhammaantii,	The creator of all breathing creatures
Khalqiga kii u sinnaayee,	That is just
Mid saaxiib la ahaynee,	And who has no earthly friends
Singalkii iska diidayow,	
Saaxirkii kala guurraye,	We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,	May you forever stay aloft
Aan siduu yahay eego e',	Let me have a full view of ours
Kaana sib kanna saar,	Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours
Kii saaciidada keenayow,	That which brought us blessings

Sadadu kay ku xidhnaydow,	
Sallaankii istiqlaalkow,	You are our ladder to liberty
Seyruuqii Afrikaadow,	and Africa's shining beam
Siraadkii na iftiinshayee,	Your glow lit us all
Soomaaloo dhan xoreeyayee,	And liberated Somalis
Saaxirkii kala guurraye,	We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,	May you forever stay aloft
Aan siduu yahay eego e',	Let me have a full view of ours
Kaana sib kanna saar,	Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours
Faradka iyo sunnaa,	You are the third pillar after the divine commandments
Wixii diinta ku saabsan,	
Adna kii saddexeeyayow,	
Saaxirkii kala guurraye,	We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,	May you forever stay aloft
Aan siduu yahay eego e',	Let me have a full view of ours
Kaana sib kanna saar,	Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours
Kii gumeysiga saarayee,	You chased away the colonialists
Isticmaarkii sumeeyaye,	and poisoned the imperialists
Seedihii bogsanaa iyo,	and softened our hardened tendons
Seetadii naga gooyayow,	and unlocked the chains
Saaxirkii kala guurraye,	We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,	May you forever stay aloft
Aan siduu yahay eego e',	Let me have a full view of ours
Kaana sib kanna saar,	Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours
Soomaaloo is-cuneysoo,	At a time when Somalis turned on each other
Isa seegan dhammaanoo,	
Saqda qaylo dhawaaqdiyo,	When wailing filled the night air
Sulub laysu cabbaystiyo,	Each armed for communal strife
Hadba soof la xabbaadhiyo,	
Saraayaa demi weyday,	
Kii laydhiisu na saaqdayow,	He whose fresh breeze soothed all
Kii sadqeeyay qabaa'ile,	and brought communities together
Isu saaray gacmaayee,	and bonded Somalis arm in arm
Saf walaala ka yeelayow,	and restored brother- and sisterhood

Saaxirkii kala guurraye,
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,
Aan siduu yahay eego e',
Kaana sib kanna saar,

We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
May you forever stay aloft
Let me have a full view of ours
Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours

Nimankiina siraayayee,
Waax-waax noo kala saaftayee,
Solanaayay codkeennee,
Innagoo dhexda suunku,
Sabarkeenna qarqooray,
Kii sadkeenna cunaayayee,
Sarartiisa ka muuqdayee,
Surwaalkii ka yaraadayee,

Those who deceived us
then divided us
and stole our resources
and squeezed us dry

and greedily gorged themselves
Whose thighs exude the loot
revealed by the tight fitting shorts

Daaro loo sibidheeyiyo,
Sariiraa lagu seexdiyo,
Kabadh suuf laga buuxshiyo,
Mid baabuurta sifeeyiyo,
Sagaal 'boy' iyo 'kuug' iyo,
Aayad saarta carruurtiyo,
Weliba seeska lahaa,
Kii saabaanka u laabayoow,

who resided in palaces
with comfy beds
and closets loaded with stuff
Served by multitudes of servants
Car cleaners and nine cooks and servants
In addition to child minders

You took the wind off their sail and pushed them into the sea

Saaxirkii kala guurraye,
Sarreeyow ma-nusqaamow,
Aan siduu yahay eego e',
Kaana sib kanna saar,

We have parted ways with the colonial wizard
May you forever stay aloft
Let me have a full view of ours
Lower the Union Jack and hoist ours

Sowjarkaa hubka qaatayee,
Intuu soodhka ku taagay,
U diyaar ah salaantiyo,
Saraakiisha amraysaay,
Sifihii isticmaarka,

Ka siyaadiya maantoo,
Sibilkeenan ag joognoow,
Sibirtiisa is-taagoo,
Nin walbaan sigib-beeloo,
Sare u taaga gacmaayoo,
Sacabka isku garaacoo,

Our armed troops

Who are ready to salute
And the officers commanding them
All must perform better than they did during the colony

The populace around them
Line up behind them
All in discipline
Raise your palms
thunderous applause

Nin walbaan saddex goor,	And all must pray and thank Allah the invincible.
Subxaanoow waa mahaddaa dheh.	

Despite the celebration and the quick agreement on the draft constitutions, some minor differences remained between the authorities of the two territories. These divergences notwithstanding, neither the Northern nor the Southern elite doubted the merits of the union. However, events were moving so rapidly and everyone was so enchanted with independence and unification that the harmonization of the two acts of union did not occur immediately. The most urgent and agreed-on priorities were the formation of the national parliament and the appointment of the government. Parliament was established through the combination of the two territorial assemblies on July 1, 1960. The newly organized parliament of the Somali Republic had 123 members (33 from the North and 90 from the South). Parliament's first task was to elect its own leaders to preside over the chamber's deliberations and manage the nation's legislative agenda. Members of parliament began to organize into two political camps. One group that included many Northerners, led by Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, joined Abdullahi Issa and his group, which they thought would command a majority. This assumption was not



Osman's first presidential visit to Hargeisa, 1962. Courtesy of the family of President Osman.



President Osman's first official portrait. Courtesy of the family of President Osman.

unreasonable since Issa and Egal, as former prime ministers of the territories, were two of the three leading politicians in parliament. Egal thought that Abdullahi Issa would be president and he the prime minister.

Whatever political future Egal was imagining for himself, he unfortunately failed to maintain the confidence of at least fifteen Northern parliamentarians, who broke ranks and joined the other political group from the South.[7] These political machinations led to the election of Jama Abdillahi Qalib, from Berbera (Egal's hometown), as Speaker of parliament. Jama's election derailed Egal's ambition of becoming prime minister. Once the leaders of the National Assembly were chosen, things then turned to the election of the republic's provisional president.[8] Unlike the competition for the post of Speaker, Aden Abdulle Osman was elected on July 5 without another candidate being fielded, with 107 votes. Immediately after the election, President Osman officially proclaimed the union of the two Somalilands.

The two political blocs that informally emerged after July 1, 1960, were not divided along party or ideological lines. For example, one group was led by Abdullahi Issa (SYL) and Mohamed Ibrahim Egal (Somali National League), while Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee (SYL) led the other cluster. Sharmarkee's group was

able to win support for its candidate for parliamentary Speaker, who was a member of the SNL. This meant that party lines had disappeared and most MPs supported whomever they wished, regardless of political affiliation. Such development signaled instability in the political process, marked the absence of party discipline, and had far-reaching implications for the country.

President Osman had the sole responsibility for nominating the prime minister, and his choice reinforced the emerging split among the MPs because he did not appoint either of the former prime ministers. It appears that President Osman did not select Abdullahi Issa or Mohamed Egal for three reasons. First, Osman and Issa both hailed from the Hiran region. Therefore, choosing Issa as prime minister was not politically feasible in a democracy. Second, President Osman thought that because Issa had been prime minister for the previous four years of the trusteeship period it was time to give others a chance. Third, the president had little knowledge of Egal, although the two men had met at least three times in Hargeisa and Mogadishu during their respective short visits to the two cities. Further, Egal's substantial claim of being the political leader of the North, which should have boosted his chances for the premiership, was undercut by the split among the ranks of the Northern MPs, many of whom joined the opposing political camp. Instead of appointing one of the two former prime ministers, President Osman selected Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee, a longtime member of the dominant SYL party, as his candidate for the premiership.

Once the president called on Sharmarkee to form Somalia's first postcolonial government because he was the most qualified candidate, a new tide was generated that turned the political order upside down. In contrast to 1956, when MPs were reluctant to self-promote for appointment as a minister or deputy minister, large numbers of MPs made a rush on Sharmarkee's home clamoring for ministerial portfolios.[9] But Sharmarkee could select only twelve deputies for the various portfolios, since that limit was set by the law of the republic. The prime minister designee's task was made particularly difficult by the refusal of former prime minister Abdullahi Issa to accept a ministerial post. Sharmarkee was seriously worried that a sufficient number of MPs who were loyal to Abdullahi Issa, as well as others who felt belittled for not being appointed, would vote against the government in the confidence motion. Issa finally accepted the assignment of foreign minister ten days after the nomination. Egal had already agreed to take up the defense portfolio. This concluded what many considered to be the nation's first political minicrisis. Table 5.1 lists the names of cabinet members of the first Somali government.

On August 19, 1960, Sharmarkee's government was able to win a parliamentary vote of confidence by a wide margin (93 in favor out of 121). Nearly all of those who voted against or abstained were members of the former trusteeship

Table 5.1 The first Somali cabinet

Name	Position/portfolio
Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee	Prime minister
Mohamed Ibrahim Egal	Defense*
Abdullahi Issa Mohamoud	Foreign Affairs
Abdirazak H. Hussen	Interior
Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden	Finance
Ahmed Haji Dualeh	Agriculture*
Ali Garaad Jama	Education*
Mohamud Ahmed Mohamed	Justice
Ali Mohamed Hirabe	Information
Sheikh Ali Jimale Barre	Health and Labor
Abdinur Mohamed Hussen	Public Works and Communication
Osman Mohamed Ibrahim	General Affairs
Abdi Hassan Booni	Deputy prime minister*

* Portfolios held by Northerners

government or a few Northerners who felt slighted because they were not appointed to ministerial posts. Despite these problems there were two reasons the prime minister was able to garner such wide support. First, the majority party ordered its MPs to support the government, and most of them obliged.[10] Second, most members of the opposition political parties voted in the affirmative because their leading lights, such as Egal (SNL), Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden, "Zoppo" (Hizbia Digil Mirifle Somali; HDMS), and Abdi Hassan Booni (United Somali Party), were granted cabinet positions. The inclusion of these personalities in the Somali government set a historic political benchmark on the continent, as it was one of the first African governments of national unity. Despite the potential for problems the prime minister included these men in the cabinet because he was concerned that if the opposition was excluded from the government, it could create political divisiveness in parliament, which might impede national integration in these formative years of the republic. Moreover, since both the SYL and the SNL were majority parties in their respective areas, including members of the SNL in the coalition was the sensible thing to do if the government was serious about unification and integration. In contrast, the minister of the Interior, Hussen, who was a close associate of the prime minister, thought that having the opposition in the cabinet would mean a divided government, which might prevent the state from being functional and could lead to a divided nation.[11] The prime minister stuck to his strategy and moved forward with his agenda.

Immediately after the cabinet was formed, President Osman articulated the character of the republic and the respective roles of the citizens and the leaders:

> Being unworthy of such a great responsibility and honor, I promise, before our almighty God, that I will make all efforts to always act in all conscience and good faith to the best welfare of the Nation, in order not to disappoint you, beloved citizens, and the National Assembly which, having your mandate, has appointed me to the highest position of the State, until you pronounce on the Constitution which your representatives have given to the Country. . . . The character of the President of the Republic, let me say, friends and brothers, must be—as it is decreed by the Constitution—the symbol of national unity, not because it is I who occupy this position today, but because it is according to a fundamental law; and, therefore, it must not be confused with a Political Party or Parties or, even less, with an ethnic group or groups. I am sure that anyone who is appointed to this high position must, for his honor's sake, . . . try to be such; and I, for my part, shall make every effort. It is necessary also that all of you so consider it until the contrary is proved, by trying, of course, to excuse the unavoidable mistakes which the President, and other responsible men may make, in good faith, while carrying out their functions, because of their obvious lack of experience. The Somali Nation, by making itself a democratic and parliamentary Republic, has given itself one of the best and most liberal constitutions, a fact to which high personalities of the United Nations and of the world have testified. But it is my modest opinion that only you, citizens, can strengthen democracy; in fact democracy does not mean anarchy but the power invested in the people in accordance with order and based on the laws. Therefore, to strengthen the democracy of our country means that all of us must respect order and the laws that we have made for ourselves, and love one another, and resolve our controversies in a peaceful and fraternal manner.[12]

The president's remarks revealed him to be a man who was deeply conscious of his weighty responsibility and who had clear understanding of the symbolic significance of national unity embedded in the presidency.[13] He also underscored the centrality of civic engagement among the population, respect for the rule of law, the vitality of peaceful means for resolving political difference, and genuine democratic practice. These inaugural remarks signaled that Osman was a different type of Third World leader, one less enamored with his "greatness" and more attentive to his limited role as enunciated in the constitution.

While the president was setting the constitutional tone for the country, Prime Minister Sharmarkee took a quick tour to learn more about the country. He reflected on his first countrywide experience, particularly in the North, where he paid a moving tribute:

> In the five days I have been here, it is difficult to describe adequately what I have seen. One thing however stands out vividly in my mind which I could

> not forget in a hundred years. This is your custom of waving green branches in welcome of your guest. It was an impressive sight to see thousands of people standing along the route waving these branches. I don't know if you all realize the significance of this custom, but it is rooted in ancient custom going as far back as 2000 years. The waving of green branches denoted then, as it does now, that there is peace and plenty. I pray to the almighty that He will bless us with more rain and an abundance of food and goodwill. This fine custom, I may add, is peculiar only to this region and is not known in other parts of the Republic.[14]

He was also moved by his encounter with Somalia's nationalist poet, Abdillahi Sultan Timacade, in the village of Kalabaid:

> The reception which I received at Kalabaid will remain in my mind for a long time. Thousands of people gathered to welcome me and there were hundreds of mounted horsemen. I will remember the beauty of the lines composed by Abdillahi Sultan in a gerar which he recited for my benefit. The gerar, which was especially for Independence Day. Anyone who hears that gerar will wonder where the composer received his education. What is surprising is that no matter how little formal education a gabay singer or gerar may have, the way they compose their poetry reflects a disciplined mind and taste for beauty. Hearing this particular gerar one feels the composer has taken years to record it carefully in book form for it traces the early origins of religion from the arrival of Adam to the last of the prophets.[15]

Sharmarkee's visit to the North not only left him with fond memories but also exposed him to the stark underdevelopment that the country in general and the North especially faced. He was overwhelmed by the degree of poverty and the lack of infrastructure in the North. Despite the impoverished Italian and British colonial legacy, the values and principles that the president articulated and the warm sentiments the prime minister voiced were genuine thoughts about the Somali spirit that needed to be embedded in sound national institutions.

The final issue to be settled at this stage was the adoption of the Act of Union. Although the unification of the two Somalilands was put into practice on July 1, the Act of Union's legal status briefly remained unresolved. Paolo Contini, the chief UN legal advisor to the Somali Republic, summed up the history of the Act of Union this way:

> The decision to form a union was reached at a conference of Northern and Southern Somali leaders held in Mogadishu between April 16 and 22, 1960. . . . On June 27, the day after independence, Somaliland's Legislature Assembly passed "the Union of Somaliland and Somalia Law," incorporating the proposed Act of Union previously sent to Mogadishu. Section 1(a) stated that "The state of Somaliland and state of Somalia do hereby unite and shall forever remain united in a new, independent, democratic, unitary republic the name of

> which shall be the Somali Republic." . . . There is no doubt that on the first day of July a full and lawful union was formed by the will of the people of the two territories through their elected representatives. However, the legal formalities had not been completed in time . . . [and] the matter was clarified seven months later by the adoption of the new Act of Union with retroactive effect as from July 1, 1960 for the whole of the Republic.[16]

Others who were less intimate with the Act of Union reported that the delay was attributable to the difference between the Northern and Southern versions of the act.[17] It was reported that five outstanding issues required attention and resolution before parliament could approve the union act. First, leaders of the former British Somaliland wanted to protect the contracts, which lasted until December 1960, of British military officers attached to the Somaliland Scouts. Northern authorities thought that the only way for them to honor the contracts was to keep the scouts separate from the Somali army until the end of the year. In contrast, leaders in Mogadishu wanted immediate integration of the two forces under the command of Colonel Daud Abdulle Hersi. Second, these sources reported that the North wanted to annex all agreements between the two Somali regions and their former colonial masters to the union act, but the South thought the union act was not the appropriate place to do so. Third, some members of the Northern leadership proposed that governments in both regions resign on June 30, but the Southern leaders suggested that the Southern government should remain as a caretaker government in consultation with the Northern authorities until July 7, when a new national government for the Somali Republic would be formed. Fourth, diplomatic sources reported that some elements of the Northern leadership proposed that the country should be divided into three administrative regions with similar population sizes, but the government in the South insisted on retaining the six regions in the trust territory and possibly dividing the North into two regions. Although these four issues were reported in some diplomatic circles, Northern and Southern Somalis who observed and were party to the process of unification noted that no such propositions were put forth by elements from the North or the South.[18] Finally, the breakup of the Northern MPs into two political camps, one led by Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal that allied itself with Abdullahi Issa and his group and another group of at least fifteen members, including Jama Abdillahi Qalib, Ahmed Haji Dualeh, Abdi Hassan Booni, and Ali Garad Jama, who aligned themselves with the opposition, made a unified Northern position on the union act moot.

The full and practical acceptance of unification and the formation of a national parliament and government meant that whatever differences might have existed between the two union acts did not slow down the nationalist momentum. The responsibility for integrating the two acts into a single one was given to the UN-supported Integration Committee. The committee's first draft appeared

in September and was unanimously approved by the Interior subcommittee of the National Assembly. However, it was not until mid-January 1961 that the act was voted on in parliament through acclamation, despite three Northern MPs, Abdillahi Ahmed, Osman Garad, and Ibrahim Id, reporting to President Osman that they did not consent.[19] However, the chief opposition leaders, Michael Mariano and Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, who also hailed from the North, supported the motion to enact the Act of Union.

Constitutional Plebiscite, Political Expedience, and Leadership

While the technicalities of the Act of Union were sorted out, the new provisional government turned its attention to the other daunting challenges of the time, such as ensuring a smooth integration of two contrasting colonial civil service systems and creating a coherent national policy. Three items dominated the first year of the republic. These were the plebiscite on the draft constitution, the election of a permanent president, and the appointment of the government after the provisional period was over. The dynamics generated by these three events transformed relations among the elite from the euphoria of independence and unification to that of political expediency and personal interest.

The first signal that marked this new departure was that important political actors such as Mohamed Ibrahim Egal and Sheikh Ali Jimale, who were either bypassed for top positions in the provisional government or whose ally was not rewarded with the premiership, sought political revenge by campaigning against the constitution in the forthcoming plebiscite. Most cabinet members of Prime Minister Sharmarkee's national unity government, some of whom were from non-SYL parties, were loyal. However, several SYL and non-SYL key ministers instigated dissent. Lobbying against the constitution, they thought, would bring down the government by discrediting the president and the prime minister as national leaders if the majority of the population voted against the charter. Thus, they campaigned vigorously in their respective regions and quietly but effectively articulated two ideas. First, Egal and his Northern associates, particularly some elements of the civil service,[20] told the public that Southern domination of some of the key positions in the national government meant that the North had been hoodwinked into the union. Second, Sheikh Ali and his partners peddled the sectarian idea that Sharmarkee's government was dominated by the Darod genealogical group, ignoring that the president who appointed the prime minister was a member of Sheikh Ali's kin group.

President Osman and the rest of the government were aware of this campaign and made every effort to expose it as a fraud by educating the public about the constitution. Given the low literacy rates of the population, the government extensively used the two national radio stations, Radio Hargeisa and Radio Mogadishu, to familiarize the public with the substance of the draft constitution.

Further, senior government leaders, such as the president, the prime minister, and other cabinet ministers,[21] traveled to various regions to persuade the citizens to endorse the constitution, which they argued enshrined the core Somali values of democracy, accountability, and justice. The government also sought the support of opinion makers in the regions to help the public understand the essence of the document.[22] Finally, although key leaders of the government worked hard to win support for the constitution, they made certain that the public understood that the charter did not belong to this government alone or to any particular political party. They explained that instead it was a consensual national document that should be endorsed or rejected on its merits. President Osman lamented that those who did not like his choice of prime minister opportunistically conflated the charter with their partisan politics.[23]

The referendum day, June 20, was peaceful and without violence in any part of the country. All predictions were that a substantial majority of voters would endorse the charter, although stiff opposition was expected in two regions.[24] The results of the plebiscite sanctioned the birth of the new African republic and closed the curtain on the precolonial and colonial political order.[25] Table 5.2 shows the distribution of votes and shows that the vast majority of voters in six regions endorsed the constitution while those in the remaining two regions of the nation rejected the charter. A finer resolution of the evidence reveals major differences within those localities where opposition was strongest. In the North, 54.63 percent of the voters in the Hargeisa area rejected the constitution, while 51.15 percent of those in the vicinity around Burao approved it. Collectively, a narrow majority of the voters in the central areas of the two northern regions voted for the constitution, while an overwhelming majority of the people in the eastern and western zones voted in favor. The other area in the country where most of the voters rejected the constitution was in Hiran. In fact, Hiran had the highest rejection rate, 61.99 percent. It is critical to understand why the margin of the majority negative vote in the North was relatively slim and why the Hiran region was the exception in the South. This research shows that the rejectionist areas had one thing in common: two leading politicians were not satisfied with the way the new ministerial portfolios were distributed. In Hiran, Sheikh Ali Jimale, one of the leading politicians in the South who hailed from the area, was very unhappy that the provisional president did not appoint his friend Abdullahi Issa as prime minister but instead chose Sharmarkee. Similarly, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, the most eminent Northern political leader, felt unappreciated despite being called to run the Ministry of Defense of the new republic. Unlike Hiran, where the majority of the deputies went along with Sheikh Ali, a significant number of Northern deputies broke ranks with Egal and campaigned in favor of the constitution. This explains why it was approved in one region of the North and a significant proportion of the population in the entire northwest supported the charter.

Table 5.2 Results of the plebiscite

Region	District	No. of voters	Votes in favor of the constitution		Votes opposed to the constitution		Spoiled ballots	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Benadir	Mogadishu	42,583	26,804	62.95	15,297	35.92	482	1.13
	Marka	94,067	83,450	88.71	10,597	11.27	20	0.02
	Brava	72,770	70,911	97.44	1,599	2.20	260	0.36
	Afgoi	78,901	77,627	98.39	895	1.13	379	0.48
	Wanle Weyne	69,000	68,994	100.00	—	—	6	0.00
	Villabruzzi	87,679	83,414	95.14	4,234	4.83	31	0.03
	Balad	51,341	38,461	74.92	12,553	24.45	327	0.63
	Itala	64,068	60,354	94.21	3,684	5.75	30	0.04
Regional total		*560,409*	*510,015*	*91.01*	*48,859*	*8.71*	*1,535*	*0.28*
Lower Juba	Kismayo	44,999	40,302	89.56	4,640	10.31	57	0.13
	Margherita	64,018	60,975	95.25	2,692	4.20	346	0.55
	Afmadù	59,271	58,702	99.05	368	0.62	201	0.33
	Gelib	40,990	39,479	96.32	1,442	3.52	69	0.16
Regional total		*209,278*	*199,458*	*95.31*	*9,142*	*4.37*	*673*	*0.32*
Upper Juba	Baidoa	114,678	114,441	99.80	213	0.18	24	0.02
	Bur Hakaba	87,331	87,041	99.66	97	0.12	193	0.22
	Lugh Ferrandi	110,978	106,561	96.02	900	0.82	3,517	3.16
	Hudur	66,051	65,833	99.66	121	0.19	97	0.15
	Dinsor	60,856	60,147	98.83	369	0.61	340	0.56
	Bardera	54,991	53,831	87.89	1,156	2.11	4	0.00
Regional total		*494,885*	*487,854*	*98.58*	*2,856*	*0.58*	*4,175*	*0.84*
Hiran	Belet Weyne	16,360	6,930	42.36	9,359	57.21	71	0.43
	Bula Burde	21,629	7,366	34.06	14,194	65.63	69	0.31
Regional total		*37,989*	*14,296*	*37.64*	*23,553*	*61.99*	*140*	*0.37*
Mudugh	Galkayo	53,412	43,476	81.39	9,658	18.08	278	0.53
	Dhusa Mareb	26,598	23,098	86.84	2,589	9.78	911	3.43
	El Bur	56,399	52,598	93.26	3,609	6.39	192	0.35
	Obbia	32,452	29,716	91.56	2,519	7.77	217	0.67
Regional total		*168,861*	*148,888*	*88.18*	*18,375*	*10.88*	*1,598*	*0.94*

(*continued*)

Table 5.2 Results of the plebiscite (*continued*)

			Votes in favor of the constitution		Votes opposed to the constitution		Spoiled ballots	
Region	District	No. of voters	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Migiurtinia	Bosaso	41,727	29,169	69.91	12,308	29.49	250	0.60
	Candala	43,992	42,035	95.56	1,924	4.37	33	0.07
	Alula	54,765	54,641	99.78	4,484	0.08	80	0.14
	Isku Shuban	68,107	63,278	92.91	44	6.58	345	0.51
	Gardo	80,399	78,190	97.25	2,198	2.74	11	0.01
	Eil	83,908	78,876	94.01	4,977	5.93	55	0.06
Regional total		*372,898*	*346,189*	*92.84*	*25,935*	*6.95*	*774*	*0.21*
Hargeisa	Hargeisa	37,608	10,449	27.78	27,087	72.02	72	0.20
	Berbera	7,534	2,220	29.47	5,231	69.43	33	1.10
	Borama	14,965	14,380	96.09	522	3.48	33	0.43
Regional total		*60,107*	*27,049*	*45.00*	*32,840*	*54.63*	*218*	*0.37*
Burao	Burao	19,295	6,427	33.30	12,868	66.70	—	—
	Las Anood	14,661	12,090	82.46	2,553	17.14	18	0.12
	Erigabo	9,970	3,950	39.62	6,019	60.38	1	0.00
Regional total		*43,926*	*22,467*	*51.15*	*21,440*	*48.81*	*19*	*0.04*
Grand total		1,948,348	1,756,216	90.14	183,000	9.40	9,132	0.46

Source: Referendum Costituzionale 1961. (Thanks go to Said M. Shire, who provided a copy of this document.)

Available evidence illustrates that Sheikh Ali, Egal, and their associates decided to campaign against the constitution to get even with Osman and Sharmarkee and their political camp.[26] The dissidents assumed that if voters turned down the constitution, then the government would be discredited, and as a result, they could sail to power. Thus, their campaign was about portfolios in government rather than the substance of the draft constitution. Unfortunately, however, they politicized kin identity to such an extent that it enabled them to mobilize substantial proportions of their respective genealogical groups to oppose the constitution. An examination of the political geography of the plebiscite clearly reflects the influence of politicized genealogy in the two regions at the time. But I hasten to add that, despite the power of this ideology, the vast majority of the Somali voters approved the constitution.

The consensus among the Somali people and the diplomatic community was that the referendum was free and fair, except in two locations in the South:

Wanle Weyne and Itala. In Wanle Weyne, the district commissioner, a former pro-Italian named Ibrahim Police, told the illiterate and poor public that anyone who voted no would be counted as Christian. Moreover, both district commissioners stuffed ballots into the yes boxes to such an extent that, in the end, the two villages had more voters than the resident population. To be sure, these two fraudulent cases marred what was otherwise an overwhelmingly free and fair constitutional referendum. Nonetheless, when all is said and done, the majority of the electorate supported the constitution, and the significant negative vote in the central region of the North and the no vote in Hiran only underscored what became convincingly obvious: the two breaches in the South were not deliberate government policy, as minister of Interior Hussen immediately removed the two district commissioners responsible for the irregularities, and the Civil Service Commission demoted them.

What was less clear was the size of the entire vote, which seemed too high given that the estimated population of the country was about three million. One of three reasons might explain this outcome. First, it is most plausible that overenthusiasm on the part of the authorities in some of the "positive" regions allowed underage people to vote, and that could have swelled the rolls. Second, Somalia's estimated population figures could have significantly understated its population size. Third, a combination of these two scenarios might have prevailed.

Two opposition parties, the Greater Somali League and, more importantly, the now-allied SNL and Somali National Congress, lodged petitions with the Supreme Court alleging that the government had sanctioned irregularities in the plebiscite. On July 4, the highest court in the land rendered its decision by certifying the results of the referendum and dismissing the petitions.

Having failed in their opposition to the constitution this group quickly shifted their attention to the presidential election. Ironically, this group, nicknamed Katanga Group after the secessionist group in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, had an opportunity to challenge the provisional president for reelection to a regular six-year term, regardless of the referendum's outcome, and spare the country the possibility of a constitutional crisis.[27] But in their minds their political interests loomed larger than those of the nation. Such behavior set a powerful political precedent that many ambitious politicians would follow in the future.

The campaign for the presidency started long before the referendum. The two candidates for the post were the incumbent, Osman, and the minister of Health and Labor, Sheikh Ali. Ironically, Egal did not even consider competing for the presidency. Both Osman and Sheikh Ali hailed from Belet Weyne and had been senior members of the ruling party. The candidates adopted two contrasting campaign strategies. Sheikh Ali was unwilling to declare his candidacy until immediately before the constitutional plebiscite; however, his candidacy was an

open secret in the capital. Given that his presidential ambitions were driven by his anger toward President Osman for selecting Sharmarkee as prime minister, he tried to mobilize all those who felt the same and other MPs who desired a ministerial post. The group considered the president to be beholden to his wife's kin group. To win enough votes, Sheikh Ali and his group promised appointments to some in this kin group. For instance, it has been reported that the premiership was offered to two individuals.[28] Further, some accounts indicate that cash was distributed to MPs to secure their votes for Sheikh Ali. This was the first time that MPs' votes were reportedly purchased by presidential or prime minister candidates in the country's history, and this corrupt legacy has since bedeviled Somali politics.

In contrast, Osman was assumed to be a candidate by the public and members of parliament, but there is no record that demonstrates that he actively wooed MPs to vote for him. Despite his not soliciting votes, some MPs sought him out to tell him that they intended to support him. Many more MPs who felt that he was the right man for the job, given his performance over the previous year, quietly endorsed him. His hands-off approach to the campaign notwithstanding, the prime minister and some of the senior cabinet members worked on his behalf. Yet he rejected the idea of making promises to MPs in return for their votes.[29] This approach to politics was Osman's defining characteristic.

These divergent styles and agendas came to a head at the National Assembly on July 6, 1961. Parliament started its deliberations at 9:30 a.m. as scheduled. Three ballots were required unless one of the candidates won two-thirds of the votes in the first ballot. The results of the first ballot were announced at 10:15 a.m. Each candidate received sixty votes, and one vote was disqualified as it was not decipherable. In the second round, Sheikh Ali advanced by two votes. Once this was pronounced, many thought Sheikh Ali would win the last and final round. Here is how the American embassy observers described it:

> [On the second ballot] Sheikh Ali Giumale improved his position and obtained 61 to 59 for Aden Abdulla, one vote again being illegible. It was thought that Sheikh Ali Giumale would now go on to victory but on the third and final ballot, there was a slight shift in the sentiment and Aden Abdulla received 62 votes to 59 for Sheikh Ali Giumale after it was finally decided the deputy with the indecipherable handwriting was actually voting for Aden Abdulla.[30]

Osman's quiet sentiment, recorded in his diary on the same day, reveals his apprehension and delight in his standard self-effacing manner:

> The results of the first balloting were announced: 60 for me, 60 for Sheikh Ali, 1 vote annulled. It is clear that those who were fighting for me have been made fun of by at least 16 deputies, who deceived them.[31] I do not think even Sheikh

> Ali Jimale is satisfied, as it is said that he had invited people from his office to Villa Somalia (Foreign experts), being certain to be elected. The second balloting was disappointing for me: 62 for Sheikh Ali, 59 for me, but the third and last balloting had inverted the sides: 62 for me, 59 for Sheikh Ali! So I am reconfirmed President of the Republic for 6 years. God help me! I am sure that I have not only a quiet conscience, but also have all the good intentions for my country and for my people. Sheikh Ali Jimale was one of the first to come and congratulate me. I hope his move was dictated by the heart. Anyhow when he was leaving, thanking him I told him that what I said to him in the evening of July 4 in the Villa was dictated by the heart and that I would be pleased for him to come as soon as he could to talk together.[32]

Osman's self-confidence that he could have a good life outside politics and the presidency gave him an outlook that was in sharp contrast to most of his Somali colleagues and his African peers. Because of this attitude he was able to trust nearly all his contemporaries, even when they had deceived him or betrayed their oath. He had faith that people can reform themselves and can learn from past mistakes.[33]

Although the presidential election, one of the most intense and democratic contests on the continent thus far, signaled maturity among the Somali elite, it also marked the start of electoral politics driven less by the urgent needs of the country and more by expediency.[34] The most visible manifestation of the politics of personal gain and public loss unfolded immediately after the election as a new government was formed. While Sheikh Ali's quick congratulatory visit suggested political maturity, the invisibility of one of the president's enduring friends, Haji Farah Ali Omer,[35] who was also one of Sheikh Ali's strongest supporters, indicated that those who voted for Sheikh Ali had not accepted the majority's verdict. Sheikh Ali's group thought of two approaches to extract concessions from Osman. First, a group of parliamentarians allied with Sheikh Ali planned to introduce a motion in parliament to annul the election.[36] Eighteen MPs signed the petition, but despite their commotion the Speaker of parliament refused to accept their plea. When Osman heard about this he noted that Sheikh Ali's group had the right to petition parliament and that the Speaker should give them their due:

> I received the President of the Assembly. He asked what I think about the famous motion and if communication regarding it must be given to the National Assembly. I said I find it in bad faith, but sincerely I do not see how he can avoid asking the Assembly if it is to debate or not.[37]

This issue dragged on for another month, until the assembly Speaker received the opinion of the Supreme Court, which he had requested. The court rendered its opinion on August 12 that the incumbent had received the necessary majority in the third and final ballot and therefore was justly elected president.

While these maneuvers were taking place, a parallel campaign unfolded. As President Osman began the constitutionally mandated consultation with public leaders to nominate a new prime minister, Sheikh Ali's group lobbied to have a say as to who should be the party's nominee. The first person Osman consulted was the Speaker of parliament, Jama Abdillahi Qalib, who suggested that Sharmarkee should be renominated.[38] When the president approached the acting prime minister for suggestions, Sharmarkee dropped a political bombshell by saying that General Daud Abdulle Hersi was the appropriate person for the job.[39] Sharmarkee told Osman that a new person should be named who would not be immediately rejected by one group and who would have respect from the divided house. Although the president appreciated Sharmarkee's concern, he was not willing to nominate the general:

> Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee thinks it is right to choose someone outside the National Assembly, who enjoys unanimous respect and consideration. He mentioned the name of Daud Abdulle Hersi, Commander of the Army, whose incomparable qualities I do not doubt, but it is unthinkable to appoint him, because in fact he is a military officer, not a politician supported by any parliamentary group, and because we need him where he is.[40]

A group that supported Sheikh Ali, consisting of Abdullahi Issa and Mohamed Ibrahim Egal,[41] put forth a proposition shared by a few other MPs suggesting Sheikh Ali for prime minister. They argued that if the president was not willing to appoint Sheikh Ali as prime minister then he should give their group a chance to pick someone else, since they had the endorsement of nearly half the MPs. Osman rejected their suggestion as he was mindful of setting a "dangerous precedent" in which the president was considered to be the representative of only those who voted for him rather than the entire country[42] as the constitution requires.[43]

Despite Sheikh Ali's group mounting a spirited campaign to win the premiership, most MPs, including a substantial number from the North and other responsible individuals the president consulted, advised him to retain Sharmarkee as the prime minister. Sharmarkee received the letter of nomination from the president on July 11 and accepted the honor with strong reservations. His hesitancy was because some of the opposition members threatened not to accept posts in the new cabinet, while many of his supporters were adamant about excluding the "ungrateful" former ministers.[44] Sharmarkee met with Sheikh Ali, who demanded that half the cabinet must be given to his supporters if he was expected to take part in the new government. The prime minister designate rejected Sheikh Ali's conditions, believing they would turn his government into a dysfunctional institution. While Sharmarkee was pondering the makeup of the

cabinet, Osman sensed the prime minister's unwillingness to confront the challenge. He recognized Sharmarkee's difficult task of forming a government that could secure a confidence vote given the opportunistic behavior of many MPs. Nonetheless, he was very disappointed with the prime minister for not vigorously using his platform to outmaneuver the few extremists in parliament. He used a Somali proverb to underscore his disappointment: "Halkii cir laga sughayay ayaa ciiraano katimid" (Where rain was expected, fog came instead).[45]

An agonizingly long period of negotiations ensued and the prime minister designate had to soften his stance by increasing the number of ministers and undersecretaries. These moves were meant to appease some of the MPs who could support the new government during the vote of confidence in parliament. This attempt almost backfired as many of the prime minister's supporters were angered by the inclusion of people they considered opportunists. Further, the president was less concerned about the prime minister making compromises and more disenchanted by the increase in the size of the cabinet, which included a number of incompetent MPs.[46] In addition to the expanded size of the ministerial portfolios, several new undersecretary positions were also created. Despite Osman's qualms,[47] the prime minister finally selected fifteen ministers, who took the oath of office in the presence of the president. Osman reminded them of the need to work cooperatively and how vital confidentiality is in public affairs to safeguard the national interest.

These compromises failed to satisfy several ambitious MPs who wanted to be ministers but were excluded from the new lineup. Consequently, a group of MPs sponsored a bill that would limit the size of the cabinet, which parliament approved. President Osman did not mind the reduction in the size of the cabinet, but he threatened to veto the bill unless it was made to conform to article 81 of the constitution, which stipulated that an "ordinary law can limit the number of ministers and not the number of undersecretaries and ministers without portfolio."[48] Parliament adjusted the bill accordingly, and the president signed it.[49] Consequently, Sharmarkee went back to the drawing board to reduce the size of his cabinet. Several cabinet members—Abdi Hassan Booni, Osman Mohamed Ibrahim, and Omer Sheikh Hassan—offered to resign to make things easier for him. Further, the prime minister met with his undersecretaries, and after a thoughtful discussion they all resigned and asked him to select any five of them and leave the others out. After some of these adjustments were made, Sharmarkee was able to reduce the size of the cabinet to satisfy the new law. At long last, parliament debated the program of the government. Prime Minister Sharmarkee defended his program and chided parliament for making it nearly impossible to establish a government. Ambassador Andrew Lynch of the United States reported,

> [The prime minister said,] "There is an old saying . . . 'according to which the Government is a mirror of the parliament from which it is drawn.' Moreover, the Parliament should respect the wishes of the people who have elected it. Therefore, to reduce the number of Ministries it is first necessary to reduce the ambitions of the deputies. That can happen only if the office of Minister and Undersecretary are considered not as a personal prerogative, worse yet as a source of profit, but simply as an honor and responsibility. I hope that some such miracle may take place." [Prime Minister Sharmarkee added] that during his year as Prime Minister no less than 106 deputies had asked for appointment to Government office.[50]

On August 23, parliament concluded its debate on the government's program. Then the Speaker called for the deputies to cast their votes for or against the government and its program. In a surprising shift of sentiment, ninety-four deputies supported the government and nineteen opposed it.[51] This was a substantial victory for the prime minister, but the political shenanigans in parliament over the previous three months indicated that deputies could withdraw their support from the government on the flimsiest of pretexts.

The government of national unity, which included key opposition members, did not resolve fundamental political differences between the prime minister and his opponents, but it brought a tad of political relief for a short while. Prime Minister Sharmarkee thought that his government had met the opposition halfway by including them in the cabinet but was weary of the latter's opportunistic predilections, which could easily undermine this compromise. Similarly, the president was alert to the precarious nature of this balance and made every effort to support the prime minister while telling all MPs to heed the national interest. This truce came to an end when the president's old friend and political nemesis, Sheikh Ali, and the prime minister failed to see policy issues eye to eye. Sheikh Ali continued to act independently from the prime minister and the cabinet. In one instance, the minister of Finance, Abdulkadir Zoppo, reported to the prime minister and the president that Sheikh Ali was using public resources to support his friends:

> Sheikh Ali Jumale continues his bad faith policy of bribing the people for his aims: he is sending to Italy sick people for medical treatment at the expense of the state, even if they are well-to-do persons like Mohamed Abdi Dhere, families of MPs like Sharif Garar and his daughter, and he calls back those who do not return the favor to him like the brother of the member of the Assembly Ali Gaal, from whom he expected to vote in his favor at the presidential election.[52]

While the prime minister was worried about Sheikh Ali's alleged misappropriations, other issues arose that intensified their differences. The two men became deeply alienated from each other, and the prime minister resolved to sack

the minister. When Sharmarkee brought the matter to the president's attention, the latter asked him to reconsider and see if they could work out their differences. Despite Osman's intervention and those of some members of the SYL's usually inert central committee, the matter came to head, and Sheikh Ali was fired on November 30, 1961.

The resolution of the conflict between the prime minister and one of his ministers provided limited political peace, as two more challenging issues confronted the country and government. First, some MPs felt their official remuneration was insufficient and introduced a bill in parliament to double their salaries. Osman urged the prime minister to confront the issue and convince MPs that the country could not afford the expense. But the MPs coveted the standard of living of ministers.[53] The government's attempt to dissuade the MPs failed, and Osman called on many of them to urge them not to support the bill. Despite knowing that the president would not support the bill, the MPs went ahead and passed it, fifty-six votes in favor and eighteen opposed. Osman found the bill offensive and used his veto power to send it back to parliament, with an explanation that the bill was inappropriate at this point in time. President Osman felt that it would be difficult for supporters of the bill to muster the necessary two-thirds vote to overcome his objections, but the MPs had other convictions. The Speaker of parliament, who claimed to be opposed to the bill, reopened the debate after supporters of the bill failed to garner the two-thirds majority necessary to override the veto. On October 8, 1961, seventy-five of the eighty-four members present passed the bill and thus had the necessary two-thirds to override the veto. Osman was outraged and immediately called the prime minister for consultation, who told the president to consult with the Speaker of parliament. Osman was not eager to talk to the parliamentary chief as he felt that the latter had orchestrated the affair. Instead, he summoned General Hersi, the commander of the Somali military, and enquired what he thought of disbanding parliament and calling for a fresh election. The general advised against radical action as he was uncertain that such an election would produce more enlightened MPs. General Mohamed Abshir, the police commissioner, who saw the president later that day, was instead convinced that a new parliament would have substantially better-educated and more nationalistic members.[54] It seems that Osman came to the conclusion that the mere threat of disbanding parliament was sufficient threat to those who endangered the national interest.

What made the parliamentary act incomprehensible to the president and the few MPs who opposed it was the devastation to many communities caused by the two perennial rivers in the country, Shabelle and Juba, overflowing their banks while MPs were focused on raising their salaries. The president instituted a temporary levy on all state employee salaries, including the president and parliamentarians, to support the victims of the flood. Although the cabinet did not

act speedily on the proposition, it was nonetheless implemented in the end. The contrast between parliamentarians engaged in serving their own interests and flood-devastated communities waiting for help from the government was not lost on many. Osman saw the devastation from the air:

> The reconnaissance flight in the flooded areas, lower Shabelle and Juba, took six hours and by what we could see from high, the situation is really painful. I have seen so much water, beginning from Afgoi, which has no precedent in the history of Somalia. We followed the course of the rivers and as the river [Shabelle] disappears and reappears all the areas became lakes and swamps. It seems the situation was worse in the Shabelle area. From Kismayo to Merka the population took refuge on the shores of the sea.[55]

This most significant humanitarian challenge to the country was managed with the help of external assistance, but it exposed the mismatch between the priorities of most MPs and the welfare of the population.

Attempted Coup in Hargeisa and the Democratic Process

Another major test of the division of responsibilities between the executive and judicial arms of the government occurred at the end of 1961. As if the government did not have enough urgent problems to deal with, Somalis learned from their leaders that several junior military officers attempted a coup in Hargeisa on December 11. Although the announcement was shocking to the majority of Somalis who cherished unity and independence, elements in the North were saddened by the failure of the coup. This event was not the first sign of discontent among a small number of Northern politicians. Disappointed with their inability to garner the highest positions in the cabinet, they were frustrated by their powerlessness to satisfy their personal ambitions. While none articulated reservations about the unity of the republic, about a month before the attempted coup, anonymous parties in Hargeisa clandestinely distributed flyers in the dead of night calling for the region's secession from the republic and demanded that Northern MPs resign from their posts. When the president heard about this, he summoned Egal, minister of education and the leading Northern minister, and asked him about the issue. The latter responded that those who engaged in the affair

> did not dare send such a demand to him and said that the authors of such documents are unknown, but anyhow such people did not dare send such a demand to him. He added that such propaganda has no relevance because it is made by irresponsible people. Furthermore, if the perpetrators of such activity were known to the public, the people in Hargeisa would lynch them.[56]

Egal denied that he had any knowledge of these rumblings; however, he showed his dissatisfaction with the government leadership in Hargeisa. Three months

earlier, the minister of education sought the president's assistance to convince the minister of Interior of the need to transfer several of the senior civil servants in Hargeisa to other regions. Egal's concern was that nearly all these officials came from the same genealogical group. When Egal made the request to the president in the presence of the prime minister, Osman told them to talk with the minister of Interior, Abdirazak H. Hussen, whose portfolio it was. Shortly thereafter, the president alerted Hussen to Egal's concern. Hussen broached the issue differently from how Egal had and argued that genealogy-driven transfers of public servants would not be just and could undermine national integration. Here is how the president reported the exchange in his diary:

> He replied that to transfer public officers there must be plausible reasons, as [by] transferring them for the reasons put forward by certain people, you satisfy them, but at the same time you make others unhappy. So you end up only strengthening tribalism. There must be a legitimate premise to transfer civil servants from their posts. I find right the way of reasoning of Hussen, so I told him that anyway he, the prime minister and Mohamed Ibrahim Egal must work together to create the premises to [solve the problem].[57]

Egal did not pursue the matter any further, but there is evidence that some of the Northern political parties and a few of their MPs were unhappy, although they did not articulate a program of action to deal with the problems that were particular to the North.

The attempted coup in Hargeisa was a shock not only to the government and the people of the country but even to some of the leading Northern politicians, as Egal's statement indicates. Leaders of the coup informed the rank and file that the president had declared a state of emergency and had handed power to General Hersi. Then they immediately arrested the commanding military officers, who were from the South, and their police counterparts. Meanwhile, they made forays toward Burao and Borama. The explicit contradiction between the claim that General Hersi was appointed as head caretaker of the government and the arrest of the regional military officers was not lost on the regional police commissioner, Jama Mohamed Qalib, who was among those the coup leaders convened. For a brief duration coup participants controlled parts of the city, but once General Hersi announced that the mutineers' claims were false and did not have his blessing, the rank and file realized the deceit and acted against the culprits, wounding and capturing a coup leader and killing another. They subsequently freed their commanders and rounded up the rest of the mutineers.

Two contrasting theses have been suggested to explain the motives behind the attempted coup: these junior officers had support from key Northern political leaders and their frustrations reflected the dissatisfaction of the people of the region with the union, or these young and ambitious officers felt entitled to higher

ranks because of their superior education in comparison with their commanding officers and were too impatient to address their concerns through established channels. The evidence marshaled to support the first thesis is quite slim, and the second scenario seems more plausible. Contrary to claims circulated in the country and the region, the leading Northern politician, Egal, had distanced himself from the activities of some of the radical elements in the North for much of his political career.[58] Further, after the coup was foiled he did not facilitate the release of the coup makers, in contrast to Northern MPs who pleaded with the president and prime minister for clemency toward the coup makers. Other major figures, such as Michael Mariano, apologized for the ill deeds of the young officers. The only thing that might give a modicum of credibility to this first thesis is the meeting that MPs from the central part of the Northern region held that discussed ways of restoring the prestige of their genealogical groups.[59] According to the report of the minister of Defense, Sheikh Ali Ismail, who attended the meeting, some elements in the gathering talked about bringing down the government through a no-confidence motion to save the coup makers from prosecution. But there is no evidence that those in the gathering endorsed what the young officers had done or supported the secessionist idea. Contrary to all claims, Northern MPs who were involved in the debate on the coup devoted their effort to pleading with the government, including requests that the government should pay the legal fees of the accused.[60]

In contrast, the evidence for the second thesis, that they acted out of ambition,[61] seems more convincing. First, the population of Hargeisa and more broadly the Northern region did not come out in droves to support the coup, and whatever little commotion was created in the city and the region petered out within a week. Such lackluster reaction from the population indicates that whatever frustration the population had toward prevailing political affairs was not linked to the attempted coup. Second, the majority of the rank and file of the armed forces in the region who aborted the coup were Northerners, which indicates that the concerns and grievances of the ringleaders were limited to that cohort. Third, the regional police commissioner, Jama Mohamed Qalib, whom the coup makers summoned to their base and then took to the radio station, refused to collaborate with them and remained loyal to the republic. The commitment of such a senior police officer to a national ethos demonstrated that he and other Northerners in similar posts did not share the kind of alienation the coup makers felt.[62]

The attempted coup became the first serious test for the democratic government of the country and to the unity of the nation. Examining how the government and the courts dealt with the affair and the culprits provides a clue to the leadership's commitment to the rule of law. The first official step the government took was to dispatch senior military and civilian leaders, such as the ministers of Interior and Defense and the commanders of the police and military forces, to

Hargeisa to investigate and report on what went wrong. The team submitted their report on December 15 to the president and prime minister. Their investigation confirmed that the renegade officers were motivated by a lust for promotion and a wish to detach the North from the rest of the republic to realize their objective.[63] This was reinforced by one of the leading businessmen in Hargeisa, Jirdeh Hussein,[64] who told the US embassy and the Somali president in early 1962 that the people of the North were doing well although some professional politicians were unhappy:

> Jirdeh spoke mainly about economic conditions in the region and described them as flourishing. . . . He . . . maintains an office in Mogadishu but stated that his business in Mogadishu was very poor due in part to the general low level of commercial activity of Mogadishu and the fact that goods from the Sterling area [the former British colonies] are at a disadvantage in the Southern region. He explained this was due to the restrictions placed on imports from the Sterling area while no such restrictions exist on Lira imports from Italy. Jirdeh stated that the people in the North, however, were in great need of development projects and other assistance and that they were in a mood to accept help from anyone. . . . As to the internal political situation, Jirdeh thought there was some dissatisfaction among the professional politicians because of the loss of influence suffered with union and apprehension generally about the "Italian System." On the whole, however, there was stability and no serious separatist sentiment.[65]

Similarly, Jirdeh met President Osman, and their discussion was reported in Osman's diary:

> Received Haji Jirde Hussein from Hargeisa, rich merchant, politically close to the NUF [National United Front]. He talked about the situation in the Northern Regions and said that during the last year and a half the prosperity acquired by the population is unprecedented. The discontent of the population is, therefore, a psychological fact connected with the falsity of the members of parliament who invent nonexisting misrule and the distance from the central government of the people who were accustomed to being close to the administration. For such distance they have a feeling that they are not able to obtain prompt response to their applications. Haji Jirde suggests transferring the civil servants from there to the south and those from here to the north, mainly police and civil servants.[66]

Debate ensued in government circles regarding how to deal with the rebellious officers once they were brought to the capital. On December 17, President Osman spoke to the nation about the events in Hargeisa. In addition to lamenting the untimely death of an educated Somali officer, Osman's speech tried to explain that the country's democratic system is not akin to chaos and that everyone is subject to the law.[67] Others, such as the minister of Justice and General Hersi,

advocated the establishment of a military tribunal. Their concern was that a civilian court might be too lenient and thus not deter potential mutineers. The president advised that the Constitution of the Somali Republic did not allow for the creation of military tribunals.[68] Before a decision was made regarding the course of justice in the case, several MPs proposed a parliamentary investigation, but the majority of parliamentarians rejected this idea.[69]

Many Northern MPs sought forgiveness for the plotters. A few went to the president asking his intervention, but Osman responded that what they were asking him to do was not within his legal authority. Others approached the prime minister for clemency, while a few respected Northerners, such as Haji Basbas, asked for the minister of Interior's good offices in the matter.[70] In the end, the government decided that it did not want to set a precedent for any extralegal treatment of the case and started making preparations for a trial. Northerners pleaded for the case to be heard in a civil court and that non-Somali and British-trained lawyers be found to defend the accused. The government initially rejected the need for foreign lawyers, but the president persuaded his colleagues to honor this request, and two Indian lawyers from Kenya were hired by the defense. The prime minister was conciliatory and did not want the physical elimination of the accused, but Sheikh Ali Ismail, minister of Defense, and a few other Northerners felt strongly that the coup plotters should be treated swiftly and harshly. The final accord between the prosecutors and the advocates stipulated that the court procedure used would be the Indian penal code,[71] which was still in effect in the North, but the substance of the law would be the Italian penal code that was in force in the South. The government compromised further by accepting that a British judge working in Somalia would preside over the case.

The case came to court on February 2, 1962. Soon thereafter the funds collected by the families of the accused and their supporters proved insufficient to pay lawyer fees, and the government decided to cover the balance. As the case went forward, the facts against the accused seemed immutable. However, the prosecutor made a minor procedural error during the deliberations and the judge quickly dismissed the entire case on technical grounds.[72] It has been reported that the lawyers noted that the accused were guilty of mutiny but not of coup d'état. Further, the judge denied the prosecution the opportunity to appeal the case. President Osman and other senior members of the government were shocked at the judgment and the judge's blocking the appeal.[73] There were some celebrations in Hargeisa, but most Somalis felt that the judge was biased. In the ensuing cabinet meeting to discuss government options, the minister of Defense was among the angriest in the cabinet over the decision. With the recognition that the government had the right to appeal the case, the prime minister consulted the president and the two decided that the state should drop the case, limiting its reactions to a condemnation of the judgment and expelling the judge

from the country. The coup instigators regained their freedom. This was the first time in Africa's postindependence history that a government released coup makers without any retribution. In fact, most of the coup plotters were rehabilitated a year later when border hostilities broke out between Ethiopia and Somalia.[74]

The government's conduct in dealing with the coup plotters attests to its democratic and constitutional orientation. President Osman's stance against the wishes of the well-respected national commander, that the constitution did not permit the creation of military tribunals, clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to the rule of law. Moreover, the government's willingness to drop the appeal altogether might be considered too lenient and risk setting a precedent that could encourage others to pursue an illegal course of action. However, this was a farsighted decision that prioritized national integration over the particular case of a few disgruntled junior officers. Finally, the government's conduct during the crisis revealed that it honored the division of powers between the three branches of government by not interfering with the judiciary even when it thought that the judge had transgressed the law. The most vivid testimony of the respect the government had for the law was noted by the Indian defense lawyers. Here is how President Osman recorded the conversation that he had with those lawyers:

> I received Abdullahi Ahmed Weid and the two Indian attorneys who defended the officials from the coup d'etat attempt in the Northern Region. . . . They wanted to come to give me their regards and to thank me for the collaboration that we had in the Court and in the Country and for the absolution of their work in defending the accused. They said that they were greatly comforted by the full liberty given them and the unimpeded independence of the judiciary in Somalia.[75]

Finding Its Footing in the Cold War

The Cold War was in full swing when the republic came to the world stage as a sovereign nation. Somalia suffered from two political and economic conditions that made it exceptionally vulnerable to the machinations of superpower rivalry. First, the republic was insolvent financially and required a great deal of economic assistance to balance its ordinary budget and to make a dent in the deep development deficit it inherited. Second, the Somali nation was fragmented into five territories under four colonial establishments: Britain, Italy, Ethiopia, and France. Two of these territories, British and Italian Somalilands, gained their independence and formed the republic, while Somalis in the other territories were either dispossessed subjects whose existence and rights were denied, as in Somali Ethiopia, or they were marginalized in the British colony in Kenya, or they constituted a separate entity as in French Somaliland. The subjugation of

Somalis in these territories, their desire to join the independent republic, and the commitment of the republic's leadership and people to ensure the reunification of the Somalilands exerted strong political pressure on the government, which significantly constrained its policy options. However, such a desire for unification confronted the reality of the Cold War.

These two challenges were intertwined as the search for unification required a growing economy that could provide resources and enhance the prospects for a viable strategy. Thus, the first priority of Somali policy makers was to garner resources to cover the government's budget deficit as well as secure investment for development. In addition, they felt they had to secure the sovereignty of the republic by developing national military and police forces. The combination of these imperatives in the context of the Cold War created arduous challenges for the leadership. On the economic front, Britain and Italy were willing to provide some budgetary support for the republic for some time. The former colonial powers contributed 138.7 million Somali shillings (one American dollar was worth slightly over 6 Somali shillings) for the first three years of independence, which amounted to 31 percent of the national budget.[76] Somalia's ordinary budget deficit declined significantly during 1961 and 1962 as government tried to eliminate its reliance on foreign budgetary support by cutting costs. The need of the government to reduce its budget deficit was made even more urgent by the disappearance of British aid after the republic broke diplomatic relations with Britain in 1963, when the latter refused to respect the outcome of the plebiscite it conducted in the Somali-populated region of Kenya.[77] Meanwhile, the government was frustrated by Italy's inability to deliver its assistance on schedule.[78] Other countries offered development assistance rather than budgetary support. The biggest contributors were Italy and the United States, before the USSR and People's Republic of China joined the donors in the mid-1960s. Although the government reduced its budget deficit over the years, it lacked other resources to develop the country. Consequently, it was entirely dependent on the goodwill of others for investment. The trap here was that nearly all development aid, East or West, was conditional, and Somalia did not possess the know-how to understand the long-term consequences of accepting certain types of aid. Be that as it may, the republic garnered the largest per capita foreign assistance in Africa during the 1960s.[79] Despite the government's ability to play the West against the East in attracting resources, this did not translate into superior economic performance for the nation.

The government was not able to perform the same balancing act in the defense field as it could on the economic front because of the structural constraints that existed at the time. Among the major ones was Ethiopia's original commitment to absorb Somalia into its empire. Emperor Haile Selassie stridently pursued this objective, which became obvious when he campaigned against the independence and unification of the British and Italian Somalilands. Once this

plan failed and the Somali Republic became a reality, Ethiopia entertained invading and taking over the republic. The United States was worried that the emperor might militarily act against the new republic.[80] Consequently, Ethiopia decided to pursue a military strategy that would ensure its dominance in the region. It used all necessary means to convince the United States and its allies to facilitate this agenda. Haile Selassie's first achievement in this regard was the support he got from the West in illegally absorbing Eritrea in 1961. Regrettably, this gave him the false sense that his designs for Somalia might be realized.

For the Ethiopian project to be turned into reality, Haile Selassie tried to force his agenda on the larger geostrategic designs of the United States and the West regarding their efforts to keep the Soviets and Chinese out of the Horn of Africa. America had three objectives in the region. First, it sought to prevent the Soviets, China, and Egypt from gaining a foothold in the Horn by containing the Somali-Ethiopian conflict and maintaining its base in Eritrea.[81] Second, to keep the East out of the Horn, the United States and its Western allies had to find a complex formula that would convince Somalis that their interest would be best served by staying in the Western camp while at the same time assuring Ethiopia of continued American support. Third, the United States desired to maintain and expand its facilities in Eritrea at Kagnew base. Consequently, the United States urged Britain and Italy to take the lead in convincing the Somali government to depend on the West for security support, and the two offered to provide military aid for up to a five-thousand-man army. Despite some success that Prime Minister Sharmarkee had in convincing President John F. Kennedy about the needs of the republic, Ethiopian allies in the US government, particularly in the state and defense departments, were able to derail this possibility.

The Somali government preferred to gain sufficient military support from the West. Although President Osman was a strong critic of the communist regimes, he suspected that the West was committed to maintaining its support for Ethiopia.[82] Consequently, Sharmarkee and General Hersi did not rely on the goodwill of the West but explored alternative sources of military support from the East. The US embassy was livid about claims made by the Soviets that Sharmarkee was critical of America during his visit to Moscow.[83] But Somalia's search for a defense ally continued, and the first evidence of the West's bad faith came when Britain reneged on the democratic wishes of the Somali population in northern Kenya. The republic broke off diplomatic relations with Britain, which derailed the British-Italian defense front for the West.[84] America immediately urged West Germany to replace Britain in the matter, but the Italian-German affair dragged on while the Soviets were moving fast in accommodating Somali requests. It appears that Somali leaders were pragmatic nationalists and less concerned about the ideology of the major powers. West Germany was particularly seen as a good potential ally given its support for national unification and also because it provided satisfactory

logistical support for the Somali police and pilot training for the nascent Somali Airlines.[85] President Osman traveled to Italy in a last-ditch effort to convince Italy and its partners to provide the military support Somalis sought:

> Work meeting in the office of President [Antonio] Segni. [After] usual exchanges of opinions and for my part, sounding out the intentions of the West towards equipping our army, Segni and his collaborators told us that the Italians, Germans, and Americans are in consultation about making a decision, but that they know that we are already in talks with the Soviet Union about the same needs. They asked me what the Somali government will do if the West's response is affirmative. I responded that I do not see why Somalia should not opt for the Western offer if it is similar to or more favorable than the Soviet one and that, in my opinion, the West had beaten about the bush too much with Somalia but that there is still time [to support] our needs.[86]

The discussions continued during the president's visit and finally came to a head. President Osman reported in his diary,

> I returned just now from having seen President Segni. . . . He told me that, as I already knew, there was a meeting in Bonn between Italy, America, and Germany, at the end of which there was an agreement to concede the arms needed by the Somali army, and to that effect, the diplomatic representatives of the three countries in Mogadishu will negotiate, within the week, with the Somali government. The advisor of Segni who was present at the meeting added that in the agreement the Western countries foresee arms for 6000 men and that if the government of Somalia is in agreement, the materials will begin to arrive not later than next December.[87]

While these presidential negotiations were going on in Italy, the Soviets offered what the prime minister and the Somali general thought was a more generous military deal, and the two did not wait for the president's return from Italy to decide. President Osman was embarrassed to find out about this while he was in the thick of these discussions:

> I hear that 60 officials were sent from Mogadishu to the Soviet Union, some of whom were expected here in Italy to study. It is evident that the government there has decided everything without me regarding the Soviet Union (arms, etc., etc.), purposely forgetting what I had recommended, i.e., to not involve themselves with the issue before my reentry from this state visit, during which I would have sounded out Italy as to whether it and its allies in the West were leaning towards deciding to give us the necessary arms for our army! Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] did not think that it is I who has to sign the agreement in the end, even if, naturally, I do not remotely think of refusing![88]

The agreement was approved by the cabinet and parliament, and the prime minister brought it to the country's acting president, Jama Abdillahi Qalib, to sign into

law.[89] According to Osman, the accord involved the USSR supporting an army of ten thousand men, with twenty jetfighters and two other planes, one hundred armored vehicles, cannons, and so on, which would cost 200 million Somali shillings. In addition to this grant, they offered a credit of 40 million shillings.[90] Technically, the signing of the accord brought to an end the issue of who would equip the Somali military. The president was offended by the prime minister's behavior, nevertheless he demanded the original copy of the agreement after he arrived back in Mogadishu. He shredded the document and asked for a fresh copy, which he subsequently signed, demonstrating again that he gave national interest greater priority than his personal prestige. This incident soured relations between the prime minister and the president. These two events would have an enduring impact not only on the republic's relationship with the West but also on the country's democratic form of government.

Responsible Politics versus Corrupt Politics

Somalia's institutional, economic, and strategic Cold War challenges did not exhaust the difficulties the country's new leadership confronted. Other related troubles had to be managed to secure the democratic viability of the country. These were electoral fraud, political tribalism, and corruption. This section of the chapter briefly reviews the nature of those challenges and efforts made to contain them to illustrate the conflict between forces deeply committed to democratic governance and those whose agenda was driven by divisive ideology and sectarian interests.

Despite the population's enthusiasm for the unification of the two former colonies and the establishment of a democratic republic, all political parties from the North and the South lacked any sort of organizational discipline that could sustain structured civic politics. Without political party anchors in a country whose population was largely illiterate, a majority of senior political men plotted to prolong their tenure as well as enrich themselves through corrupt schemes. Members of parliament were strategically positioned to prolong their tenure because they elected the president, approved government policies, and sanctioned cabinets. Such a system was prone to instability as any number of disgruntled MPs could, and did, shake the confidence of the government after the referendum of 1961. These dynamics could have easily paralyzed the government if it were not for the commitment of the president and a significant number of MPs to the constitutional order that gave priority to the national interest over their personal fortunes.

The clearest manifestation of this political tussle between civic and sectarian forces was the debate surrounding the management of the respective municipal and parliamentary elections of 1963 and 1964. Local and national political actors

were divided about how to manage public affairs and these two elections clearly manifested the contrast between the two agendas. The last nationwide vote had been the constitutional plebiscite of 1961, which was widely seen as an accurate reflection of the people's will. In addition, the presidential election of 1961 was a cliff hanger, which demonstrated that the incumbent did not improperly influence the process. In spite of these democratic precedents, there was a great deal of concern that the municipal and parliamentary elections might not meet the same standards.

The 1963 municipal election was the first of its kind since the republic was formed. Constituent districts elected local councilors, which then chose mayors. In contrast, the national Ministry of Interior appointed civil servants as regional governors and district commissioners. There were 58 districts and 1,114 voting stations. According to the electoral system, political parties were required to register with district authorities their intent to compete, and the authorities verified the authenticity of the applications. The opposition parties dreaded this step as some commissioners were blatantly partisan and used their authority to deny some parties the right to register. But the opposition parties were also at fault for not following the law to register and instead blaming local authorities for their incompetence. Whatever the case might have been that led to the rejection of the applications to register, political parties could appeal to the Supreme Court after exhausting other channels.

President Osman was worried about the governing party using state resources and its control of the state's administrative apparatus to gain undue advantage in the municipal elections and consequently setting the stage for its dominance in the forthcoming parliamentary vote. He urged the prime minister and his colleagues to run an honest election. The president had encouraged the prime minister to ensure that representatives of the national police force be present inside the polling station to guard against fraud, but the government did not honor his plea.[91] Prime Minister Sharmarkee appreciated Osman's message and was himself committed to fair play, but his government failed to put systems in place that would ensure clean elections. Some local administrators, such as district commissioners and regional governors, ignored the president's warnings, the government's instructions, and the electoral laws by turning significant number of polling stations into scandalous embarrassments. This fiasco took place in large measure because of the absence of opposition-party representatives at most polling stations. Although these parties were required to have observers in each station, the opposition's national reach was limited, and therefore they left many of the stations unattended.

Voting day came on November 26, 1963, and polling took place largely in a peaceful environment. The SYL had candidates in all but one of the fifty-eight districts, Odweina in the Northern region. The five major opposition parties

collectively had candidates in all areas except in the eighteen districts where the SYL ran unopposed.[92] Table 5.3 shows the distribution of votes among the parties in all eight regions of the country. The results of the election were that the SYL won only four of the eight regions and lost the capital, Mogadishu, even though it won the lion's share of the votes. Immediately after the results were announced, opposition parties lodged petitions with the president to register their misgivings about the results. In addition, there was an attempt on the life of the governor of the Northeast District, where the Somali National Congress and Somali Democratic Union lost to the SYL. President Osman lamented the behavior of the dominant party and the opposition:

> Many of the telegrams of protest from the last few days that I received give sufficient indication of the dissatisfaction (in various areas) of the parties outside of SYL and thus demonstrate that the attempt to make things go smoothly without doubt did not succeed everywhere. The government is not at fault for this, but it is the custom of the majority of Somalis who possess power that they cannot give up their partisan spirit and easy abuse of power and misdeeds. It is also the fault of acts which are not orthodox and possibly illegal.[93]

Existing evidence suggests that the municipal election results were not an accurate reflection of public sentiment and were considered a bad omen, particularly since parliamentary elections were only a few months away.[94]

The results became an urgent wake-up call for President Osman and his civic associates. They recognized that unless more was done to ensure fair play in

Table 5.3 Municipal election results

		Political party votes			
Region	Total vote	SYL	SNC	SDU	HDMS
Benadir	464,029	369,563	51,932	9,023	18,425
Burao	28,331	5,611	12,119	10,680	
Hargeisa	73,607	23,048	34,344	6,964	
Hiran	48,481	39,342	7,445	1,694	
Migiurtinia	175,339	120,759	12,535	41,750	
Mudugh	118,894	88,126	20,447	10,321	
L. Juba	174,132	140,488	6,080	8,124	14,206
U. Juba	225,257	195,075		6,868	49,625
Total	*1,338,070*	*982,012*	*144,902*	*95,424*	*82,256*

Source: US Department of State, *Airgram A-267*, December 5, 1963, US National Archives.

Note: SYL, Somali Youth League; SNC, Somali National Congress; SDU, Somali Democratic Union; HDMS, Hizbia Digil Mirifle Somali.

the forthcoming parliamentary election, slated for March 1964, the consequence could be violence and political instability. In the meantime, parliament discussed whether to expand the number of seats in parliament before the election, but the president resisted this proposition and told those behind the proposal that this could be entertained only after the election and that any expansion should be based on actual population figures.[95] The parliament also drafted a new bill for the election and submitted it to the president for comment. Osman suggested that a number of issues in the bill should either be dropped or changed. Among the items he slated for deletion was one that called for a 24,000-shilling golden handshake for current MPs who failed to win reelection. A second item required that civil servants who wanted to run for parliament must first resign from their post, which the president felt was unfair given that the old rules permitted civil servants to take a leave of absence during a campaign and to resign afterward if they won.[96] A third critical suggestion he made was to add an item that would empower the police to guard polling stations and ballot boxes from start to finish. Further, the president noted that the bill should provide more protection for all parties during the course of the campaign and the election. The bill was resubmitted to parliament. After much deliberation, parliament voted in favor of a version that ignored the president's suggestions except the ones dealing with the golden handshake and not forcing public officials to resign their posts before becoming candidates. President Osman was furious:

> The National Assembly sent me the approved text of the political electoral laws for the next referendum. I was displeased that [the item dealing with the police was left out] which means that many could cheat . . . and the police are prohibited from entering or having anything to do with the [polling station] if not specifically requested by the chair of the station. It is clear, therefore, that my intention to have the polls watched by the police is legally unsustainable, given what is contained in article 34, number 2, and also that we need to find how to prevent this inconvenience; if not, these elections will result in lost efforts and won't end up being very calm! Of all the recommendations that I gave, only the one relating to the admission of public officials to be candidates without making them first resign their posts before has been adopted.[97]

In spite of being disappointed with the electoral law, Osman maintained pressure to ensure a fair outcome.[98] He made numerous interventions to mediate between the parties and to push the government to follow the law. In one instance, he had to push the Hiran branch of the SYL to be honorable and not delist Abdullahi Issa from leading its candidates' list, as some of its major figures wanted.[99] Despite all the efforts made to maintain peace and stability, violence flared in the central region on March 29. Before the police forcefully intervened, several people were killed in Dhusa Mareb.[100]

The day before the polls opened, the president assured the population that, despite hostilities imposed on the country by Ethiopia, the election would be a testimony to the maturity of the Somali people:

> During the past two months [Osman] had striven, together with the Government, to give full guarantees to the political parties that the electoral law would be obeyed and that devices would be adopted to correct possible loopholes and imperfections in the law itself. Therefore, the elector ought not to trouble himself to do more than go to one of the polling stations in his electoral district and vote, only once, for the party in which he has the most faith, and then to return peacefully to his daily occupation. He further declared that it depended on the electoral officials at all polling stations and electoral offices, (there are almost 5,000 of them) as to whether the election would be a big success or tragic farce and failure. He stated that neither the country nor the Government desired or had any interest in election irregularities of any type. He warned those that might attempt to commit fraud that they would not only damage themselves due to the consequent pangs of conscience and punishment under the law, but they would also damage the entire nation due to the bad precedent created.[101]

Election Day came on March 30, and despite the war with Ethiopia, there were no major troubles regarding the vote. Government mobilized its resources to ensure that all went well. All public offices were closed, except in health and security, and a significant number of public employees were deployed in the polling stations. In addition, the police were very active in securing the stations and watching over fraud. There were 1,130 precincts, and the government deployed forty-five responsible officials in each district to manage the process. All the major political parties had their representative observers in most stations and the process went smoothly. The US embassy reported that this was a well-run election:

> By general consensus this election was the fairest ever held in Somalia. The government press understandably hailed the event as spotless proof of Somali democracy in action. More accurately, high government officials including General Abscir, Police Commandant, are generally satisfied that it was well run and fraud held down.[102]

As the results trickled in, it became clear that this was the most competitive election in the country's history (see table 5.4). Governing-party SYL barely gained a majority of the seats in parliament. It was able to command that slim majority because of the ten districts where opposition parties did not compete. These districts netted the SYL twenty-one deputies. Elsewhere, the opposition ran a credible campaign as the results show. Although the three major opposition parties garnered nearly 40 percent of the vote, their inability to form a coalition enabled the SYL to dominate the next parliamentary period. The primary reason for the

Table 5.4 Parliamentary elections

Political parties	Listed in districts	Votes cast	Percentage of vote
SYL	47	472,296	51.73
SNC	32	186,208	20.39
SDU	20	95,707	10.48
HDMS	14	80,173	8.78
Total votes for the biggest four parties			*91.38*
SANU (South)	2	3,930	
SANU (Mogadishu)	Mogadishu	7,619	
MNS	2	10,526	
ULAS	5	10,893	
PRS	3	3,863	
HDAS (South)	2	5,715	
PP	Hargeisa	2,582	
SNF	Hargeisa	2,559	
SUL	Hargeisa	3,233	
SRDP	Hargeisa	1,053	
PLGS	4	6,766	
SNS	Burao	1,496	
SNP	Burao	1,748	
SNPL	Berbera	2,490	
USP	3	7,552	
SNL	Borama	4,354	
UPP	Borama	2,306	
Total valid votes		*913,069*	*100*

Source: US Department of State, Airgram A-532, May 21, 1964, US National Archives.

Note: SYL, Somali Youth League; SNC, Somali National Congress; SDU, Somali Democratic Union; HDMS, Hizbia Digil Mirifle Somali; SANU, Somali African National Union; PRS, Somalia Republican Party; SNF, Somalia National Front; PLGS, Partito Liberale dei Giovani Somali; SNS, Somali National Solidarity; SNP, Somali National Party; USP, United Somali Party; SNL, Somali National League. Parties with acronyms not spelled out here are known only by their acronyms.

fragmentation of the opposition was that each party leader itched to gain a national leadership post on his own terms, without accommodating other equally ambitious individuals.

President Osman registered his satisfaction with the outcome of the election:

> The results are not so brilliant for the SYL, and not everything went regularly, as I had hoped, but I believe that the big scandal of inflation [of votes] that happened during the municipal election of last November did not happen this time or at least was limited to [only a few places].[103]

Despite the minor lapses underscored by the president, the election marked a historic benchmark in the country's march toward democracy.[104] The absence of election-related violence meant that Somalis were at ease with the democratic process.

Conclusion

Somalia's independence euphoria was like no other on the continent because independence had a double meaning for the population. First, as in other African contexts, it meant freedom from the inhumane servitude of the colonial order and the possibility of Somalis charting their own future. Second, liberation entailed the achievement of one of the cherished dreams of Somalis, that of uniting two of the five territories into which their homeland had been divided. Such jubilation was momentary as the new state had to confront the colossal task of building a nation and its institutions as well as develop the country. This chapter highlights the successes and the failures of Somali leaders while underscoring the critical internal political differences between the embryonic elite. Their divergence began to overshadow the vital interests of the nation.

The Somali Republic inherited numerous problems from its colonial overlords; nevertheless, it also had assets that many postcolonial African states lacked. Handicaps included the enormously costly colonial division of Somali territory into five different colonies and the deep educational and economic deficits such that barely 5 percent of the population was functionally literate. Finally, the country became independent in the middle years of the Cold War and had to deal with the strategic imperatives of the period, for which it was poorly equipped. In spite of such towering challenges, Somalis were able to come together, across colonial divides, and build a democratic and unitary state of their own, with a progressive constitution to boot. What made the establishment of such a republic possible was a combination of enlightened leaders and a population that shared many values, such as a tradition of freedom. The fundamental task facing the Somali elite was how to deploy those values and build national institutions that functioned as effective instruments of national development, a source of national identity, and a bulwark against an exploitative global order.

To transform such shared values into a democratic polity and a cohesive society required able leadership and a dedicated commitment to the rule of law, as President Osman articulated in his inaugural message to the nation. Much progress was made during the first republic, but the political elite was divided into two camps, one that endeavored to realize personal fortune through the exploitation of public power, and the other devoted to the national project. The debates about the draft constitution and the struggle over the municipal and parliamentary elections clearly revealed those political cleavages. President Osman was the leader of the civic wing of the elite and had sought to instigate a coalition of the parliamentary majority, particularly within the SYL, that could sustain a democratic national project. Osman and his close allies found the country at a crossroads as the first republic came to an end. Corruption and the electoral manipulation of municipal elections represented a future in which state affairs would be managed for the benefit of those few who controlled the levers of power. In contrast, the relatively clean parliamentary election, which Osman doggedly fought for in the midst of war, signaled a different political future in which state power would be deployed for the common good. The president clearly understood that the second republic required a fresh initiative to realize the democratic values embedded in the constitution and to reverse the use of public power for private gain.

6 The Second Republic

Democratic Trailblazing, 1964–1967

> One thing is indisputably certain. It had never even occurred to the Aden/Abdirazak Team to look into the possibilities of applying the norms of Somali tribalism to the state, or its institutions and functions. One reason for such disregard of any such thought is that the applying of tribal norms and criteria to the state and its institutions would have been then a flagrant violation of the Somali constitution. . . . Paradoxically, the principal targets of the Dalka's verbal violence were the governmental team of the first president of the Somali Republic, Aden Abdulle Osman, and his choice of Prime Minister, Abdirazak Haji Hussen—whose government is now accepted by all to have been the best Somalis ever had. Dalka itself was not oblivious, even then, of that fact. Stating it openly, however, would have been seen as despicable and venal . . . Dalka then noted. . . . The basic distinguishing feature of the . . . team was the fundamental factor underlying the political framework . . . consensu[s]. . . . One of the results of such consensual approach was the removal of the need to resort to political violence. Hence, neither the government nor its opponents considered intimidation as an instrument to use in the political arena. . . . The advantage of this system of mutual tolerance . . . included . . . freedom from physical intimidation and from the resulting worry about their personal safety. Consequently, one of the common sights [in Mogadishu] of the period was to see Prime Minister Abdirazak Haji Hussen sitting in Juba hotel, sipping a cup of tea while dueling verbally with the critics of his government. He would, at the end, calmly walk, usually alone, to his house, situated a few hundred metres up the hill to the then Monopolio. An equally familiar sight of the period was to find the President of the Republic, Aden Abdulle Osman, performing his Maqreb prayers, beside his small Fiat, alone or with an ad hoc prayers gathering on the road side. There just were no reasons then for either of them to worry about his personal safety.
>
> —Yusuf Dhuhul, "The Dalka Days"[1]

In the short span of four years, 1960–1964, Somalia reached several positive political milestones. Many other countries in Africa drifted toward single-party order or succumbed to dictatorships (Africa saw twenty coups before 1969). Despite these successes, there was a general concern in the nation that worrisome

trends were emerging that could derail the democratic system of government and the development of the country. Among these were the misuse of public resources by some politicians and government employees, the abuse of political power by some people in positions of authority, and incompetency at higher levels of the public service that impeded the country's progress. Finally, the proliferation of political parties clearly demonstrated that most of these overnight political wannabes had no national agenda but were merely interested in securing a seat at the national table to gain access to public resources. It appears that the proverbial straw that broke the president's faith in the public administration system and the leadership of the government was the mismanagement of the local government election of 1963. His disdain for the election rigging by the leading party and its provincial supporters was shared by a few other senior members of the government, one of whom wrote an anonymous editorial in the state-owned national paper about the danger of corruption.[2]

This chapter's claim is that the period of the second republic, 1964 to 1967, best exemplifies the work of two democratic statesmen and the tussle between two competing political forces for national supremacy: the democratic nationalists versus sectarian entrepreneurs. During this period, the president and the prime minister, who led the civic element, were keen to institutionalize Somalia's nascent democracy and deepen merit-based public service, while the second camp was more predisposed to self-enrichment and saw membership in parliament and the cabinet as an end in itself. The latter group gradually coalesced around the former prime minister Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee but still had an informal and shifting membership driven by self-interest rather than an oppositional national program.

Making an Audacious Shift

Once the parliamentary election of March 1964 was concluded attention immediately turned to the formation of the new government, and the central political question was whom the president would nominate as prime minister. Nearly a majority of parliamentarians and the general population presumed that the sitting prime minister, who had overseen the successful parliamentary election in the midst of Ethiopian military aggression would be renominated. As a result a constant stream of new and old members of parliament flocked to the home and office of Sharmarkee, each one eager to impress him with his qualifications for a cabinet post.

While this political storm was brewing President Osman started, on June 1, consulting with different political and social groups regarding their thoughts about who would be an effective prime minister. He first met the three parliamentary leaders and noted that

> they were either in favor of Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] . . . or were opposed to Abdirazak [Hussen]. In particular vice president Sh. Mokhtar was clearly opposed to the prospect of Abdirazak as PM. Sh. Moctar in recognizing the shortcomings of Abdirashid does not believe that we can find anyone better. He said that he knows Abdirazak and that this man is extremely vindictive and that he believes that Abdirashid is preferable.[3]

Just a few days earlier, on May 25, the central committee of the Somali Youth League convened to discuss the party's preferred candidate for prime minister. After an energetic debate they endorsed Sharmarkee for another term despite knowing that the constitution gave the president the sole prerogative to appoint the prime minister. Only a few key members of the group knew and understood the depth of the president's doubts about Sharmarkee's capacity to tackle the tough challenges the country faced. Osman saw the party's decision as an attempt to foreclose his options and undermine his constitutional authority. When he met with some members of the central committee on June 3, they made a feeble effort to sugarcoat the party decision:

> This morning I began consultations with a small SYL group . . . who tried to sweeten the bill by verbally saying the party knows that the president is absolutely free according to the Constitution to designate whoever he believes and that therefore the decision of the SYL is purely and simply a proposal. I responded that I would like that the party, knowing about my worries that I want to do everything possible to deal with corruption, nepotism and every other bad habit of the public administration, would help me to try to find a prime minister who could hold himself to the level of responsibility required.[4]

Then the president met with several other representatives of parties such as the Somali National Congress (SNC), the Somali Democratic Union (SDU), and Hizbia Digil Mirifle Somali (HDMS), but none of these were forthcoming with fresh and imaginative ideas—they either endorsed the sitting prime minister or advocated a coalition government in which some of their members would find cabinet positions. On June 6, the secretary-general of the Somali Youth League, Yassin Nur Hassan, sought audience with President Osman. According to Osman's diary, Yassin had nothing to add to the party's recommendation, but he predicted "insurmountable difficulties if [the president] ignored the designation made to [him] by the party and chose another person and specially Abdirazak Haji Hussen."[5] In addition, the president noted that some people, including Yassin, wanted him to conduct a survey among party members regarding the potential nominee to gauge if that person was acceptable. But the president realized that this was a ploy to subvert his role and responsibilities. In a feeble effort to enhance his own chances of being selected as prime minister and realizing the unlikely chances of Sharmarkee's renomination, Yassin told the president the appointee should

be "a new element instead of one of those against the people who could be prejudiced." The president responded by stating, "[It might be] a hazard to choose a new person who is probably without public administration experience. In that event I would have accepted the suggestion if the Party would assume the responsibility." Finally, the president called in two key members of the SYL, Mohamoud Abdi Nur and Hilowle Macalin, and informed them that he was about to make up his mind about the nominee and that they and the party should do their best to ensure that the nominee received the confidence vote. But the president detected their lack of enthusiasm.

On the afternoon of June 5 Hussen came home from work and noticed a pink envelope with the president's stamp on it on his desk. Pink envelopes were used for official mail only. The letter instructed him to come to the president's office at a designated hour the following day. He recognized what this meant, since he knew that Sharamarkee had received a similar letter four years earlier. Hussen called Sharmarkee and asked if he could see him. He met Sharmarkee at his home and showed him the letter. Sharmarkee congratulated his old friend, but his body language was stiff and not what it used to be. Hussen asked him why he had thought, during an earlier road trip to Afgoi, that Hussen might be selected by the president. The prime minister responded by saying that he was among the strongest of the cadre and that he was qualified to take up the post. Sharmarkee then added that he must accept the nomination. Hussen left the discussion with mixed feelings, thinking that this was the end of an era.

On June 6, the president met with Hussen at the appointed hour. Osman shared with him the wide consultation he had had regarding the state of the nation and the essential qualities he was looking for in the new prime minister. Without directly criticizing Sharmarkee, the president conveyed his decision not to renominate the prime minister. Osman stressed that the naming of the prime minister was the only occasion on which the president had a direct hand in the administration of the affairs of the state. As a result, the best way to heed his oath of office was to stick to what he thought to be in the best interest of the country. Hussen reminded the president of his ill health, as well as his unpopular reputation at Interior. The president told him that many, particularly in the North, who were critical of him at Interior, had since recanted their negative opinions. Osman finally asserted pithily that "Somali rageyga ha kala barato" (Somalis need to learn to distinguish between their leaders). Hussen suggested to the president that he should give Sharmarkee a second chance, to which the president replied that he was not willing to experiment with his deeply held convictions. Hussen thanked the president for his consideration but declared that he could not accept the honor.[6] In the end Osman told him to take a day to think about it. When Hussen returned to his residence, General Abshir paid an unexpected visit, apparently encouraged by the president to convince the minister to accept

the new appointment. After more thought, Hussen accepted the honor with some reservations. At 9:30 a.m., June 7, the director of Radio Mogadishu, Jama Gani, was called into Villa Somalia to make the public announcement. Meanwhile, the president was deeply cognizant of the vital implications of his choice for the country's future.[7] Osman was contemplative on this day and wrote the following after the announcement was made:

> I am truly happy about [Hussen] and hope that he does not have any difficulties. . . . I did exactly what I had thought for a while of doing and in spite of the decision of the Central Committee of SYL and its parliamentary group and other pressures. I pray to Allah with all my heart that [Hussen] is able to form a government and that then he works so I am not disappointed as I was with [Sharmarkee]. Somalia needs a government that earns respect for its energy and respect for the laws and of the Constitution and for its honesty, and I think that [Hussen] has these qualities.[8]

Why Hussen?

What was Hussen's political and leadership record that convinced the president that he had the talent and the mettle to take on the challenges facing the nation? A brief summary of Hussen's performance as Interior and Public Works minister and as acting prime minister sheds light on his leadership qualities and his competence.

Hussen served as minister of Interior—a complex ministry that manages internal security, via the police, and regional and local administration of the country—from 1960 to 1962. The major challenges of the ministry were the integration of two administrative systems, the management of the constitutional plebiscite, and dealing with the coup in Hargeisa. Among the outstanding accomplishments of the minister was the competent way his staff managed the constitutional referendum in 1961. Hussen realized that, despite Somalia having a government of national unity in which opposition parties had representation in the cabinet, the opposition was clearly trying to undermine the government by openly campaigning against the constitution. Northern elements among the opposition were linked with some civil servants still in the North, such as the governor of the entire North, Osman Ahmed Indhoole. Unlike the governor, his deputy, Ahmed Jama Jengale, supported the government's position on the constitutional referendum. Another key Northerner, Jama Mohamed Qalib, commanded the police in Hargeisa. He wrote confidential police reports that described the anticonstitutional activities of some senior officials in Hargeisa. As minister of Interior, Hussen reviewed these reports and was concerned about the impact of such activities on public policy. He decided to pay an official visit to Hargeisa. John Drysdale, a former British colonial officer retained by the government to write a history of the Somali peninsula, warned Hussen that his trip

would not be successful and that he would have a lot of trouble with the opposition in Hargeisa.[9] Hussen did have a tough time in Hargeisa, where he confronted the governor and other opposition civil servants. His meetings with traditional elders and other civic leaders, in an atmosphere of mutual esteem, were more constructive. He stressed to them that the referendum was the first significant act of the nation's independence and a test of the nation's allegiance to democracy. He was amused by the reaction of many Northerners to his words. They were surprised to witness his extraordinary, to them, capacity for public speaking. Apparently, some Northerners had the stereotype that Southern Somalis spoke poor or broken Somali and were perhaps better in Kiswahili. When he returned from the week's sojourn, Drysdale paid another visit and congratulated him for a successful tour.

Immediately after his trip, Hussen transferred some of the key Northern opposition members in the civil service in his ministry, but not the governor, to other regions of the country. Mindful of the legacy of the 1959 election in the South, Hussen worked very hard to ensure that the forthcoming plebiscite was conducted with utmost probity. In that spirit, he wrote to the Speaker of parliament informing him that the opposition should station their representatives in all polling stations for the duration of the referendum. The opposition came out into the open when this declaration was made. Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, defense minister, was overtly in the opposition, but the prime minister did not sanction him.

The constitutional referendum took place in the spring of 1961, and the major opposition turned out to be from Hiran and the central part of the North. No irregularities in voting were reported by the opposition from the North or Hiran, but that was not the case in two hamlets in the South. To be sure, these two fraudulent cases marred what was otherwise an overwhelmingly free and fair referendum. Nonetheless, when all was said and done, the majority of the people supported the new constitution, and a significant negative vote in Hiran and central part of the North only underscored what became obvious: the two breaches in the South were not deliberate government policy, as noted earlier.

Hussen maintained his tough and engaged administrative practice once he moved to the Ministry of Public Works. Three major issues stand out in Hussen's performance during his tenure at Public Works, singling him out as an upright and activist minister with uncommon vision: the reorganization of the ministry and an anticorruption drive, the renegotiations with the Soviets, and the creation of Somali Airlines. The Ministry of Public Works was less complicated politically than Interior but a challenging portfolio to manage as it dealt with complex technical matters. Hussen's predecessor was an elderly man who had been an interpreter for the Italians. He had not been an energetic minister and had offered little leadership and direction to his staff. Ali Sheikh Jirde, from the North

and Somalia's first certified engineer, was the ministry's director general. Public Works was the lead ministry in expanding the nation's extremely modest infrastructure. It managed many development projects, mostly funded by the USSR. These activities required administrative capacity well beyond that of the ministry. Hussen met with the only foreign consultant, a British citizen, and reassigned him to work as an operation officer, a responsibility more in the thicket of everyday activities. Next Hussen conferred with the Soviet ambassador and the Russian technical advisor to the projects in Somalia. He impressed on them that the operation officer of the ministry, despite his British nationality, was to be seen as a critical figure in the implementation of projects under the ministry's purview.

The Soviets complained a great deal about the slow progress of the projects. Most of the delays were due to heavy congestion at the Mogadishu port facilities and untrained personnel. Hussen convened a meeting of his senior staff and discussed the matter. They concluded that the problem was that the project's schedules were too ambitious for the country's capabilities. The minister and the Soviet representative orally modified the agreement on project schedules and the speed of their implementation to their mutual satisfaction. Another area that required immediate attention was the misuse of the ministry's resources, such as cement, which were routinely sold by some employees, particularly by those who kept government stores. Moreover, staff arrived and left their workstations as they pleased. In consultation with his senior staff, Hussen demanded that people arrive and stay at their stations for the full duration of the workday. Not surprisingly, once the new work ethic was strictly enforced, many of the employees saw the new minister as a monster bent on giving them an unnecessarily hard time. Word was out in town that Hussen had worked staff too hard at Interior and now was out to do the same at Public Works. Within a week of taking office at the ministry, he turned to cleaning up his own office. Morality was lax among many Somali politicians, and the previous minister had six women working in his front office. When Hussen asked them for an explanation as to what they did, the women responded by saying that they "served the pleasure of the minister."[10] Only one of them was a typist, a poor one at that, and spoke rudimentary Italian. Hussen told the director general that he did not want to fire any of these people so soon, but instructed that they be found fitting employment elsewhere.

One of Hussen's major accomplishments during his tenure at Public Works that unequivocally marked his commitment to a national rather than a regional or tribal agenda was the establishment of Somali Airlines. It is not clear whose idea it was to set up a national air carrier, the prime minister's or the minister's. They approached the American ambassador and informed him of the country's immense communication and transportation problems, such as long and unpaved roads and the absence of air transport and railroads. The two leaders specifically requested that the American government assist them in developing air

transport. The ambassador relayed the request to his government and returned with a positive answer for the Somalis.[11] The American offer was three completely reconditioned Dakota planes, each with a capacity of twenty-six seats. Satisfied with the response, the prime minister delegated Hussen with finalizing the agreement with the ambassador. Soon the issue came up of training pilots and ground crews for the incipient venture. The ambassador said the United States could not help in this regard. On his own initiative, Hussen approached the West German ambassador and requested that West Germany assist Somalia by training the necessary people for the new airline. Within a week West Germany declared its willingness but only if the Somali government agreed to two preconditions. First, the candidates must have superior secondary school certificates with English as the medium of instruction. Second, the Germans would conduct the examinations and select the finalists.

The ministry immediately advertised twenty-eight openings on the national radio station and in the daily papers. Once the language requirement for the candidates became public knowledge, many Southern politicians heavily criticized the government, and Hussen in particular, for favoring Northerners. He met with them and tried to persuade them to the necessity for the condition but to no avail.

The West Germans conducted the examinations, and all but two of the successful candidates were from the North; the two Southerners were selected for the ground crew. As the entire class flew to West Germany to commence their studies, Hussen called on the Northern critics to take note of the merit-based competitive process for the selection of the pilots—evidence that contradicted the sectarian rumors. He pointed out that had he been a regionalist, he would have automatically approached the Italian government to assist in aviation development, a request that would have been met with enthusiasm. This would have disqualified all northerner candidates. Although some of the Northern critics recognized the fairness of the pilot selection process, the general public, now so mired in gossip and seduced by instrumentalist politicians, did not appreciate the import of this event.

Other preoccupations of Hussen were curtailment of the theft of state property and curbing of corruption. Private appropriation of ministry material was glaring and could not be ignored. Ali Sheikh, the director general, took early retirement, and there was no other person with the same combination of skills and integrity to take his place. Hussen turned to another Northerner, the deputy governor of Hargeisa. He requested that his colleague in Interior appoint Ahmed Jama Jengale as the director general of Public Works. Jengale, an efficient and honest administrator, moved quickly to clean up the ministry under the watchful eye of Hussen. It was at this time that he realized the magnitude of corruption in the apparatus of the state. Some members of the cabinet knew of it, but the issue never came up as an agenda item in cabinet meetings. One of the

visible manifestations of malfeasance was the alarming increase in the number of expensive villas that state employees were constructing and then renting to the diplomatic community. This habit had started during the Italian trusteeship administration. For instance, Bank Credito Somalo was created to mainly support farmers, but it also, on a smaller scale, gave credit to senior government officials to build their residences. One of the people who took a legitimate advantage of this was Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee, who was a functionary of the administration. Hussen, while vice president of the bank and not a government employee, could not access this credit, although he had some deposits in the bank from his dual income. During his tenure in the two ministries he did not build a home. Most Somali officials who built houses using bank credit rented them, rather than living in them as was required by the terms of the loan. Given the shortage of suitable housing in Mogadishu, these premises fetched a handsome price from the expatriate community, a practice that would only increase after independence. In due course, many politicians and civil servants took advantage of their position to raid the public purse, construct coastal mansions, and lease them to expatriates for a handsome return.

As a prominent minister, Hussen had many opportunities to appropriate strategic building plots in Mogadishu. All local government in the country, including the capital city, came under the purview of the Ministry of Interior. He owned only one plot in Mogadishu that was vacant. This plot attracted interest from the American embassy. The American ambassador paid a visit to Hussen during his days in Interior to discuss matters of concern to the Americans. Once these items were concluded, the ambassador shifted his attention to personal matters. He informed Hussen that his plot overlooking the Indian Ocean was nice property, and the embassy would be willing to develop it without any cost to him. In addition, the embassy would occupy the new building for five years after which the minister would take complete ownership. Hussen was dumbfounded. Feeling caught off guard, he asked the diplomat why the embassy would want to do him this favor instead of approaching a private business. It was now the ambassador's turn to be confounded, because the response flew in the face of his assumption that all African politicians were on the take. But such a perspective was not limited to US representatives. A few days later, the Italian petroleum company Agip made a similar offer. The company director came to Hussen and asked if the company could get permission from the Public Lands Department to build a gasoline station at a strategic intersection of the major Mogadishu-Afgoi road. Agip would build the station, but Hussen, as their titular agent, would share in the profits. However, to consummate the deal, Agip needed the minister to use his authority to secure the permit from the Department of Public Lands, a unit of his ministry. This was a lucrative offer, but the cost was even greater—severe damage to the integrity of his office and the professional judgment of his

staff—and Hussen refused. Agip's director was dismayed by the rejection but took the offer to the minister of Finance who jumped on the opportunity.

These were fantastically corrupting opportunities, but Hussen bucked the prevailing political impulses of the time. There is no doubt that he could have had any piece of land in Mogadishu during his tenure at Interior and then built up the property with Public Works resources when he headed it. Hussen belonged to a different breed of politicians. His resolute self-monitoring in that honeymoon period of the new state when unlawful seductions were abundant; his scrupulousness toward the office and the morals of his staff; and his admiration as well as concrete support for competent senior civil servants, many from the North, testified to his developing national reputation as a one of a kind. Hussen's perspective captured, and preceded by nearly three decades, what is now proffered as the only solution to Africa's troubles: good governance. From Hussen's point of view, the Italian administration was singularly responsible for normalizing corruption in the South. Keen to win Somali clients to its side, the Italian trusteeship was a time of heightened political favoritism and venality. This was the culture faced by many honest Southern public administrators. This led in the immediate postindependence period to some state elite ignoring their oath of office and exploiting their public authority for quick private gain. With exploitation becoming widespread, rank-and-file public servants were bound to join in.

Hussen's concern over the magnitude of corruption, given the aforementioned incidents and what he heard from many others, drove him to write a confidential report on the subject just before the first parliamentary election. The report warned the prime minister that the state could not afford to ignore the scope of the problem and that the government should take a strong stand against abuse after the election. The report specifically named four incompetent and fundamentally corrupt members of the cabinet. Copies of this confidential report were submitted to President Osman and the two commanders of the military and police forces.

It is this record of performance and moral integrity that convinced Osman to think of Hussen as the only cabinet member who had the courage and competency to be prime minister. Several months before the election, as Osman's frustration grew with Sharmarkee's inability to challenge corrupt members of his team and deal with sloppy behavior by public servants, he noted in his diary that Hussen was the man who could take on these towering impediments.[12]

The Politics of the Vote of Confidence

The announcement of Hussen's nomination as prime minister was a political bombshell, and politicians moved from Sharmarkee's home and office to the new center of gravity. Party politicians and opponents of Hussen went on the

offensive to tarnish his image and derail his premiership in the parliamentary vote of confidence. Among those who were vehemently opposed to Hussen was Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, one of the leaders of the SNC, who told a senior American diplomat at the US embassy that

> [Hussen] is unpopular and has many enemies, including himself, and that the SNC would certainly vote against him at every opportunity that presented itself. Egal stated that the Italians also don't like [Hussen] because he is not corruptible and that he has many foes among provincial governors because of his arbitrary and high-handed way of forcing decisions and acting without any sense of compromise. . . . Egal stated that [Hussen] is rather tactless person and was not a good politician because he was very willful. This was in reply to my suggestion that [Hussen] would probably go slow in changing policies of [Sharmarkee] especially the drift towards the Sino-Soviet bloc. Egal states that [Hussen] would give no consideration for political tactfulness if he wanted to change the policy and he wouldn't do it slowly and that once [Hussen] wants to do something nothing deters him.[13]

The challenge posed by Hussen's nomination was best summed up by *Africa Report*:

> [Hussen]'s character as a tough minded, fair and enlightened leader was noted by many. His friends say he is firm, but fair. His enemies say that he has the makings of a tyrant. Nobody disputes his courage, nor the drive to work 18 hours a day, to the detriment of his health even after a serious operation at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D. C.[14]

But it was some of the old SYL guard who were most shocked by the nomination. Immediately after the announcement was made the party's secretary-general, Yassin Nur Hassan, convened a meeting of the party's parliamentary group to challenge the nomination. The discussion lasted until midnight and was exceptionally animated. After another day of meetings a committee was set up to find a solution for the problem. At the end, the committee was not decisive in its final output and simply said that the party would not oppose the president.[15]

With the party not opposing him, Hussen withdrew whatever reservation he had and moved quickly to think about the government's policy program and membership of his cabinet. Before going any further, however, he called on his departing chief, Sharmarkee, to both seek his advice and invite him to join the new government by choosing any portfolio. Sharmarkee declined and added that he could not see himself being sworn in by President Osman. It dawned on Hussen there and then that the relationship between Osman and Sharmarkee had deteriorated, perhaps to a point of no political return. With sadness in his heart, Hussen approached Abdullahi Issa Mohamoud to join the cabinet, who refused to give either a no or yes.[16] The prime minister designate then began an

extensive consultative process. General Daud A. Hersi paid a visit to warn him about heightened tribalistic feelings among the politicians and offer counsel on dealing with it. In contrast, many others came on their own accord either to jostle for posts or to dissuade the prime minister from appointing their competitors. For instance, a delegation from Upper Juba urged him not to appoint Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden ("Zoppo"), one of their own, as minister; they accused Zoppo of looking after only his interests. Some even hinted that he was a criminal, referring to the murder of Kamal Eddine Salah. Earlier, during Hussen's consultations, university-educated Somalis complained to him about the political domination of un- or undereducated old politicians. Subsequently, he called a secret meeting of these critics, such as Hassan Ali Mireh, Ahmed Silaanyo, Ismail Jimale, and Abdirahman Nur Hersi. They met in a seaside residence. Hussen challenged them to come up with a list of possible nominees who



Prime Minister Hussen (right) sharing the list of his first cabinet with Osman, 1964. Courtesy of the Ministry of Information, Somali Republic.

would gain the parliament's vote of confidence. After two days of debates, they recognized the main political dilemma faced by the prime minister in selecting his new cabinet: talent versus regional representation. Hussen's ambition was to both curb the size of the cabinet and select as many of the younger and more educated MPs to ministerial posts as possible. While curbing the size became difficult because of, in part, intense political pressure, he was able to make headway in selecting younger, more educated MPs. As it turned out, a disproportionate number of them happened to be from the North, a result of his commitment to look for potential high performers rather than a political calculation to privilege Northerners.[17] Hussen shared his tentative list with the president on June 13.

Osman noted in his diary that the list "is not ideal, but I do not want to oppose it."[18] The one name that was missing from the list was Mohamoud Abdi Nur (Juujo), who the president thought should be considered. Hussen insisted on retaining Zoppo for his administrative skills and thus disappointed Osman in not taking Mohamoud Abdi Nur. A few more minor adjustments were made to the list before it was made public. Table 6.1 shows the original list.[19]

The cabinet, except Abdullahi Issa, who was still reluctant to join, was sworn in by the president on Monday, July 15. The general public's reaction was favorable, and a joke to humor those who were or were not in the new cabinet captured the spirit in Mogadishu's streets: Former ministers came early in the morning as if to catch their ride, expecting to be picked up by Hussen. Hussen came late, and he found only Abdullahi Issa,[20] who usually stayed late in his office and slept until

Table 6.1 Hussen's first cabinet nominees

Name	Portfolio	Region
Ahmed Yusuf Dualeh	Foreign Affairs	North
Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden	Interior	South
Aden Isaak	Defense	North
Ali Omer Scego	Grace and Religion	South
Yusuf Aden Boukah	Information	North
Awil Haji Abdullahi	Finance	North
Kenadit Ahmed Yusuf	Education	South
Abdullahi Issa Mohamoud	Health and Labor	South
Mohamoud Issa Jama	Agriculture	North
Sheikh Abdullahi Mohamoud	Public Works and Communication	South
Osman Mohamed Adde	Industry and Commerce	South
Sheikh Mohamoud Mohamed Farah	Minister of State for Somali Affairs	South

midmorning, and Zoppo, "the crippled," who took longer to get there. This, they jested, is how Hussen picked his cabinet.

If the appointment of Hussen shocked the establishment, the names of the proposed cabinet members utterly shattered recent myths about the ways of doing government business. In addition to the SYL secretary-general, who made efforts to derail Hussen's appointment, other members of the party were equally agitated. Among these were a group led by Ahmed Allor, who tried to use institutional means, by contacting the Supreme Court, to see if the president's appointment of Hussen, which ignored the party's recommendation, was grounds for a challenge.[21] When this strategy failed Allor and supporters met again and collected signatures of twenty-five members who opposed Hussen's appointment. Former prime minister Sharmarkee was present but did not sign the petition.[22] By July 9, the president was worried that Hussen's government might not be able to get the necessary vote of confidence from parliament, although Hussen seemed more confident.[23] However, the political wind in parliament was fickle, and the leading party was in chaos and began sending contradictory signals to its MPs. For example, the central committee of the SYL officially endorsed the new government, but on July 11 the secretary-general unilaterally "distributed a pamphlet to the deputies that was a sort of order of the day that confirms . . . a precedent decision by the Central Committee of the SYL which says that every deputy can act how they want towards the confidence [vote] in the government."[24] Soon after this Hussen began to realize that his government might not have the necessary votes, as he realized the opposition within the SYL was getting stronger (thirty-two against, now) in addition to a majority of MPs in the two major opposition political parties. The time of reckoning was close as parliament completed its debate on the government's program on July 13.[25] During the course of the debate it became apparent that MPs were least interested in the program and more focused on who was selected as a minister and who was left out. The president reflected on the political challenges facing the nation and the ill will of a significant number of parliamentarians:

> I am told that our country is unfortunate with the irresponsible behavior of many of its men, who continue to see the problems of the country only in terms of their own interests and how it can further their interests. There has never been a government (except for the first [one of] Abdullahi Issa in May 1956) that some of the representatives . . . did not try to avoid the consolidation [of their own power and interests] before the nomination and then plot to give him [the prime minister] the vote of confidence. I dare say, though, that we[] never had problems like today's with Abdullahi Issa in 1959. After the elections of March of that year, the declared opposition number[ed] 25 at the beginning and were reduced to 13 because of the exaggerated response of these last people. . . . After the independence and the union . . . about half of

> the parliamentarians not divided by party made their intentions clear [against Sharmarkee,] and the same thing happened when I asked [Sharmarkee] to form a new government after the constitutional referendum of 1961. The same old trick[s], ever since 1959, are repeated today with [Hussen], and therefore it is clear that they do not grow up! God save Somalis from the starving beasts in human form that are the supposed "representatives of the people."[26]

As the roll was called, opposition and government supporters stood even at fifty-seven each. The last name to be called was Ali Mohamed Hirabe, a former minister and a member of the opposition. He said yes first but quickly retracted and cast a negative vote. Government supporters tried to contest the retraction, but the prime minister designate intervened and spoke to the chamber:

> My friend Ali was pro-Italian during the trusteeship, then he joined SYL, became a minister in the previous government, and then I removed him from that post. He has been a yes-man all his life, and his chance to say no today was betrayed by his yes habit. Since my government's fate depends on his vote, I want the president of the chamber to count Ali's vote as negative, so he could be liberated today.[27]

The public in the gallery cheered and even opposition members joined in. All of Sharmarkee's ministers, except Abdulkadir Zoppo and Abdullahi Issa, who were members of the new cabinet, cast a vote of no confidence; many others decided to oppose as they felt slighted because their competitors had been appointed. Despite all of this the new government would have won the vote had not two of its ministers been away on official business overseas.

The implications of the vote of no confidence in the Hussen government were multiple. First, MPs of the two main opposition parties followed their leadership and their party's collective decision not to support the new order. This meant that there was some semblance of discipline in the two parties.[28] Second, other than the government, the ruling party was the greatest loser in this vote. The party was split between the old guard and Hussen's camp, and it appeared that the party had lost whatever political cohesion it had—a bad omen for its future. Third, conventional analysts of Somalia often think the major political watersheds are the North-South divide or along clan lines. Once more this vote demonstrated that such claims of North-South divide were dubious, as nearly half the Northern MPs voted against the government, which had just granted their region a disproportionate number of cabinet seats and some of the most important portfolios. Finally, others asserted that the governing logic of politics in the country was clan affiliation. Again, the vote defied such assertions because the majority of Hussen's genealogical group in the SYL voted against his government.[29]

Parliament's lack of confidence in Hussen created a new dilemma for the president and the ruling party. Given that a significant minority of the MPs in

the SYL (thirty-four against and fifty-one for) voted against its own government (the first completely SYL cabinet since independence), and since the opposition parties were looking to become part of a coalition government, these opponents were emboldened and thought that Hussen was fatally wounded politically. The failure generated new tension in the party and its central committee, which had tense debates that culminated in dismissal of the secretary-general on July 17. In addition, the president saw the vote as a major setback for him and the country, but he moved on two fronts. First, he immediately accepted Hussen's resignation and tried to encourage the two sides of the party to bridge their differences. Second, he restarted the mandatory consultation process to see if he could gather enough wisdom from others that would ensure confidence for a new government, although he was clear that Hussen was the best and the only option forward.[30] Many of those he consulted told him to renominate Hussen, while a few others were still adamantly opposed. However, one thing was certain: none of those opposed to Hussen suggested Sharmarkee's name as an alternative. Among the individuals the president met was Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, who suggested that he should nominate a non-SYL MP for the premiership—meaning Egal.

Despite the recalcitrance of those who were opposed to the change in leadership, political winds began to change slowly. While the president was meeting with many SYL MPs to convince them of the merit of the change, Hussen was quietly taking charge of the situation, although he was concerned that he might have to increase the size of the cabinet by adding one more minister and one more deputy minister to the cabinet to be able to overcome the resistance. The president and the prime minister designate debated this matter, and here is how the former summarized it:

> [Hussen] came to see me. He made me angry and wonder at the same time: he cannot see a way out of the crisis if we do not add other ministries and undersecretaries! The discussion we had was long and lively on my part, and I maintained that we would return to the corruption and that this would be highly criticized. In the end, I told him that if he absolutely could not do without it, the thing would have to be limited to ministers without portfolios and undersecretaries.[31]

After many consultations the president finally confirmed his wish to reappoint Hussen on August 6, 1964.[32] He urged Hussen not to significantly alter the composition of the first cabinet despite SYL opposition remaining strong.[33] Osman seemed worried that the ferocity of opposition inside the SYL might shake Hussen's confidence,[34] but once the renomination was made public, the center of gravity shifted back to the party and reappointment of the cabinet. After a series of meetings chaired by the acting secretary-general of the party, progress was

made in healing the rift in the SYL. Hussen's challenge to the party was that these internal divisions might force him to form a coalition government, which would not be good for the SYL. The party formed a reconciliation committee that consisted of eleven members, six pro-Hussen and five against him, with a mandate to resolve the debate and make binding recommendations to the party. Through this process, Yassin Nur Hassan was readmitted to the party but not to the central committee.[35] The reconciliation committee made its decision to support the prime minister designate and his government, but Hussen was not satisfied with this and demanded a secret ballot from the entire SYL central committee to ensure that there was substance behind the committee's verdict. While the party work was going on, Hussen also marginally readjusted his cabinet to diffuse political pressure and gain support for the vote without altering his government's agenda and strategy. Most memorably, Mohamoud Issa Jama, the minister designate of Agriculture in the failed attempt, offered to vacate his post so that more Southerners could be accommodated. He thought such a gesture might mollify many Southern MPs who were upset by Northerners being given disproportionately more cabinet seats in Hussen's government. In addition to this change, the new cabinet consisted of thirteen ministers and seven deputy ministers. Although the law of the land limited the number of ministers to fourteen, including the prime minister, it did not limit the number of ministers without portfolios and deputy ministers. Exceeding the size of the standard cabinet was uncharacteristic of Hussen, but it appears that he was compelled to do this by the prevailing political reality in parliament. President Osman was not happy with this increase, but he did not try to change the prime minister's mind. Table 6.2 provides the names of the new men of Somalia.

As Hussen's forces gathered momentum, elements of the old SYL guard and some of the opposition who retained their animus toward the new order were concerned that the president might dissolve parliament and call for new elections if Hussen's second government did not gain a parliamentary vote of confidence. These worries were reported to Osman by the new Speaker of parliament, Ahmed Sheikh Mohamed Absiyeh, but Osman dismissed this as the fearful imagination of opportunist elements.[36]

Nearly two and a half months after the first government was voted down by parliament, on September 27, the day of reckoning came. Parliament had begun its debate three days earlier, and the most ardent critics were a few diehards in the SYL and the SNC. Haji Musa Boqor and Ahmed Allor took the lead and were followed by the SNC's Mohamed Ibrahim Egal and Sheikh Ali Jimale. Both groups pointed to the "illegality" of the government given that its size exceeded the constitutional limit of fourteen ministers, including the prime minister. But the claim by the opposition was dismissed by ten lawyers who unanimously agreed

Table 6.2 Hussen's approved cabinet

Name	Portfolio
Mohamoud Abdi Nur	Minister of State, Office of Prime Minister
Ahmed Yusuf Dualeh	Foreign Affairs
Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden	Interior
Aden Isaak	Defense
Yusuf Aden Boukah	Information
Awil Haji Abdullahi	Finance
Kenadit Ahmed Yusuf	Education
Sheikh Abdullahi Mohamoud	Public Works and Communication
Osman Mohamed Adde	Industry and Commerce
Abdullahi Issa Mohamoud	Health and Labor
Ismail Duale Warsame	Agriculture
Abdirahman H. Mumin	Grace and Justice
Sheikh Mohamoud Mohamed Farah	Minister of State for Somali Affairs

that the two state ministers without portfolios did not breach the constitutional limits. The prime minister presented a summary of what was essentially the government's unaltered program:

- Unity of the Somali nation and defense of its provisional borders;
- Right to self-determination for our brothers still under foreign rule;
- Non-alignment at international level, within the framework of African solidarity;
- Establishment of an efficient democratic government;
- Strict observance of the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the constitution;
- Creation of national conscience as a substitute for tribal ones;
- Moralization of public administration;
- Fight against corruption and immorality;
- Observance, respect and spread of the principles of Islam;
- Raising the standard of living of our people through our constant efforts for economic, cultural, and social development.[37]

In a change of fortune, ninety-one parliamentarians voted in favor of the government, and twenty-three opposed it.[38] According to the American embassy, the crucial factor that produced this victory was the discipline exercised by the SYL's central committee.[39]



Prime Minister Hussen's first cabinet in 1964. Left to right: Awil Haji Abdillahi (Anthony James), Ahmed Y. Dualeh, Sheikh Mohamoud Mohamed Farah, Osman, Hussen, Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden, Aden Isaak, Ali Omer Scego, Mohamoud Issa Jama. Back row: Osman Mohamed Adde, Kenadit Ahmed Yusuf, Yusuf Aden Boukah, Sheikh Abdulle Mohamoud. Courtesy of the Ministry of Information, Somali Republic.

Karti iyo Hufnaan: Competent and Ethical Government

The deck was now cleared for a new effort to recharge the country's democratic institutions. Hussen's government was clear that without effective public service the chances for economic development were next to impossible, and it put all its energy into establishing such machinery. Four issues central to the agenda can be distilled from its list of priorities. First, professionalizing the public service system was deemed fundamental to all the government's reform effort. Second, the new government considered corruption, at the highest levels, as an obstacle to democratic governance and national unity. Third, the prime minister stressed the importance of nonalignment as a central pillar of the country's foreign policy, to avoid the traps of the Cold War.[40] Finally, both the president and the new prime minister were devoted to the systematic reproduction of Somalia's democratic form of government through free and fair election.



President Osman, Prime Minister Hussen, and President Nyerere of Tanzania, in Arusha, 1966. Courtesy of Abdirazak H. Hussen.

A short while after he accepted the appointment for the premiership and nominated his first cabinet, Hussen began to publicly articulate his government's commitment to a collective civic orientation and the re-creation of an efficient system of administration. He coined the apt phrase, for which he and his government came to be known, "karti iyo hufnaan" (competent and ethical government). *Somali News*, the national daily newspaper, reported an address he gave to his cabinet on June 15 articulating what distinguished the new government from old ways of doing the people's work.

> The Cabinet of which you are part has indeed a special significance. It is, so to speak, the beginning of a new mandate. You have been called to take upon yourselves such heavy responsibilities through a selection based on strict considerations of quality, an essential element for a Government administratively and technically efficient. . . . It is obvious that some considerations have been set aside that are not consistent with the supreme interest of the nation, and never were. You all well know how widespread is among the people the credence that many rise to power not in order to duly perform a high deserving function by serving the interests of the community, but in order to put their personal interests and those of certain groups before the interests of the nation. This belief has caused, as we know only too well, a recrudescence of the notorious plague of tribalism. . . . Having made this brief premise and stated

> that the new government is a responsible "working group" originating from a qualitative selection and not from a "balance" on regional or ethnic basis, it is our precise moral duty to tackle the complex problem with determination, in order to dismantle the above mentioned erroneous beliefs not only with words but above all with facts, a beginning for the strengthening of a national and civic conscience.[41]

These words stirred a great deal of wonder and political emotions across the country, and although most people appreciated the sentiments expressed by the prime minister on radio, they did not know exactly what to expect, since there was no record of this kind of political agenda. For Hussen's opponents such a declaration was tantamount to political war.[42] The first material step to give substance to the agenda was the enactment of a decree that required all cabinet members to declare their assets and properties as required by the constitution.[43] According to *Somali News*,

> All ministers and Undersecretaries of the newly formed Somali Government have unanimously agreed to submit by next week a declaration stating that they do not own movable properties, buildings or land estates, or bond and shares. The declaration, to include a list of all properties which belonged to cabinet members before the date of their oath of allegiance, is intended to prove to the Somali people that government leaders do not pursue their private interests while at the helm of the country's affairs. The declaration was agreed upon at the specific request of the Prime Minister . . . during a special meeting of the Council of ministers last Monday night. [The prime minister then presented his wish:] . . . "I am therefore asking you all not only to respect the Constitution's provision, but also to sign a personal statement in which you declare openly that you do not own, under any title, either movable properties or building or land estates, or bond and shares, even of private enterprise."[44]

Although the decree marked a sharp turn away from the old ways of conducting public business, its wording was considered far-reaching as it could be interpreted that cabinet members could not even own things like private cars. The wording was later adjusted to conform to the intent of the decree, and the president was delighted with this new departure. It was as a result of this and similar other acts that Osman privately coined a nickname for the prime minister, "dahirie" (cleanser).[45]

A little over a month after his government was confirmed, the prime minister went to work on the government's budget for 1965. Somalia had run a budget deficit recently, and this year was no different. Hussen and his Finance minister, Awil Haji Abdullahi, invested a lot of energy in reducing the deficit and began a new process that would generate revenue and curtail expenditure to attain a balanced budget in the near future. Despite these efforts it became clear that they could not balance the budget in the immediate future because of contractually binding financial decisions taken by the previous government, such as the economic agreements with the USSR. The budget was presented to parliament and

debated in late December 1964. Hussen's political foes thought they could get rid of the government by defeating the bill, but a substantial majority of MPs voted in favor (seventy-five in favor and twenty-eight against), which indicated that the government was safe for now.[46]

Immediately after the budget the prime minister turned his attention to his top priority, reforming the state's administrative apparatus to make it more efficient. The groundwork for this project started in early 1962 when a UN-supported commission (known as the Establishment Commission) was set up to harmonize the inherited divergent bureaucratic systems of Italian and British Somalilands and reform it into an effective apparatus. The commission concluded its extended tenure, and its report was approved by the cabinet under Prime Minister Sharmarkee. Because of the political pressure of the upcoming election, the report was set aside in 1963. The commission's report proposed the creation of an orderly system in which every employee would have a personnel file. Administrative tables were developed for each ministry, and all staffing and promotions were to be based on qualifications and merit. Four grades (A, B, C, and D) were set up, and ranks within these positions were established.[47] The grades and ranks are shown in table 6.3.[48]

For weeks Hussen worked with the head of the commission, a Canadian national named Hindle. Hindle described the commission's work and Hussen's seriousness about implementing it to the American embassy as Hindle's tenure came to an end:

> While Mr. Hindle gives unstinted praise to the [Hussen] government, on several occasions in the past he has remarked that [Hussen] may be ahead of his time; i.e., too progressive for Somalia's present state of political development. . . . Mr. Hindle stated that he has been working for long hours, at times until 4:00 AM in private sessions with [Hussen], . . . on the reorganization of the Somali civil service. The task was difficult according to Hindle, because the civil service was more than doubled in the last two years of the UN Trusteeship Administration under Italy. Without further elucidation Hindle claimed that this was done for political reasons. As a result the GSR [government of the Somali Republic] has been saddled with the problem of an overstaffed civil service since independence.[49]

Hussen had spent long hours studying the commission's report during the previous few months and announced his intent to implement the commission's

Table 6.3 Grades in the civil service establishment

Grade	Rank system	Monthly salary range ($)
A: Administrative and professional	1–4, 5–8	233–114
B: Executive and technical	5–10	223–64
C: Clerical and minor technical	7–11	165–50
D: Subordinate staff	11–15	61–23

recommendation. He told the commissioners that they need not be overly concerned about the political implications, as that was not their responsibility. He said their sole concern should be how to create an effective public service. In this context, the prime minister recalled Mohamed Burraleh, an administrator of high repute, from his consular post in Moscow and appointed him as the new director general of personnel. Burraleh was not happy losing his diplomatic post but took on the difficult assignment with a sense of loyalty and purposefulness. Hussen met with his cabinet and threw down the gauntlet:

> "Tonight we gather to participate in decision-making which marks yet another important milestone in the development of the machinery of our civil service. . . . I am referring of course, to the official approval of the re-organization of government and the re-establishment and integration of the entire civil service. . . . In a developing country like ours, it is essential that we make the maximum utilization of our human resources. We must ensure that duplication and unnecessary activities are eliminated. Our first step in this direction is the creation of a sound organizational structure which is the foundation upon which our public administration is to develop. The second step is the careful analysis of the organization structure to determine exactly how many positions are needed, what skills are required and where they should be located. . . . For the first time we are able to determine our manpower requirements, both present and future. This will facilitate improved budgetary and financial control and permit more accurate training and staff requirements for the future. The third and most important step is the selection and appointment of civil servants to give life to the organization, for it is the human resources who, in the final analysis, will determine the success or failure of this all important undertaking. I doubt very much if our civil service personnel have ever been subjected to the kind of screening which has just been completed in selecting officers for senior appointments. . . . Right man for the right job. I should mention at this point that the Somali Institute of Public Administration, which I mentioned briefly in my address last Wednesday, will shortly commence activities. A major priority will be training and development of our senior and intermediate staff. . . ." [A few days later,] lecturing the assembled government, directors generals and high officials . . . [Hussen] boldly stated anyone failing to pull his weight would be replaced.[50]

He was equally unrelenting and forthright when speaking to his party in February, as the American embassy reported: "The government does not dare nor will it dare tolerate any breach of the law. If this sounded like a threat, said [Hussen], it was so meant for the dishonest."[51]

The cabinet met, and the die was cast. Here is how the American embassy reported events:

> On the night of January 27–28, now known among some top local Western educated officials as the St. Bartholomew's massacre, the Council of Ministers

> met for 19 straight hours and, with each minister having a chance to speak for the Director General of his ministry, went over the dossiers and made the decisions. . . . The government's action was a bombshell. It was clearly evident from Embassy's sounding of officials and public opinion that more was involved than severe administrative measures. This was a political action aimed at re-casting the modus operandi of the state. The old way of doing business was sloppily, or handing out favors to family and tribe, or seeking monetary gain in return for routine operations. And the men who were in charge of the government's business were known to have held high office, many since independence, too often without the qualifications for the job, too many because of tribal affiliations and despite evidence that they were living beyond their salaries. This latter point is important. Corruption led to general cynicism among the public and vitiated the stated aims of this and previous governments that the welfare of the people came uppermost. Most Somalis knew that the welfare of the officials came first. True, [Hussen], from the time of his first appointment last June, has been talking about honest and efficient government. Apparently, no one was really convinced that he would or could make a general house cleaning. . . . The immediate man-in-the-street's reaction was therefore one of surprised delight. The prime minister had done what he promised; he had thrown the rascals out. The reaction among the discarded upper civil servants and their tribal and business connections need hardly be described.[52]

At the end of the meeting it became clear that about 450 senior and middle level jobs in the civil service were targeted. Reform started at the very top and the directors general of ministries were the first to feel the heat. Seven of the sixteen directors were dropped from service, notably Nicolino Mohamed of Foreign Affairs, Hassan Gudal of Education, and Jama Gani of Information. Others were transferred to new appointments, such as Ali Said Arraleh, who was moved from Finance to Public Works and Communication as shown in table 6.4.

By the third week of January Hussen had made two public speeches preparing the population and those in government services for the radical reform that was in the offing.[53] He made plain that those who were fired or made redundant were either incompetent, corrupt, or leaked confidential government information to foreign embassies.[54] The cabinet had already agreed to push through the reform process. At the end of January, the prime minister reported to the cabinet and the nation that a serious shake-up of the government administration was unfolding. Some, including the president, thought that the prime minister was courageous and absolutely on target to act swiftly, but they were concerned about his statements that grouped corrupt officials and those who leaked confidential government information[55] with those who were incompetent. The president and others thought that corrupt officials should be treated differently, taken to court rather than mixed with those dubbed incompetent. The prime minister recognized this, although he received full legal advice before his public announcement.

Table 6.4 New directors general

Ministry	Director general
Prime minister	Mohamed Shira Lawaha
Personnel (prime minister's office)	Mohamed Burale Farah*
State Planning	Botan Isaak (acting)*
Foreign Affairs	Abbdirahim Abby Farah (acting)*
Interior	Dahir Haji Osman
Grace and Justice	Abdullahi Sheikh Mohamed
Information	vacant
Finance	Ali Issa (acting)*
Health and Labor	Elmi Ahmed Duale
Education	Mohamed Aden Sheff
Public Works	Ahmed Jama Abdullah*
Industry and Commerce	Mohamed Haji Hussein*
Agriculture	Abdurahman Mohamed Hassan
Public Works and Communication	Ali Said Arraleh*

* Directors general from the Northern region

He also tried to ensure that the printed version of the talk in *Somali News* was edited to meet the objective, but the editor failed to follow through.[56]

When the commission unveiled its work, with an accent on the quality and the quantity of civil servants needed for an effective Somali government, it stressed that numerous state employees, particularly in senior positions, had neither the experience nor the qualifications necessary for their posts. It was recommended that such individuals should be given two years, with salary, to requalify through training. Those who failed to capitalize on the opportunity ought to be discharged. The cabinet accepted the report, and Hussen gave orders for its strict and swift implementation. Each ministry was then required to look into its section of the report and deal forthrightly with the recommendations. Many ministers got cold feet when facing the unpleasant task of demoting and firing staff, but Hussen told them that he would take full responsibility for the fallout and that each one must act with firmness. The prime minister had his own list of senior employees whom he suspected of exploiting their position for self-enrichment or passing confidential state information to foreign interests. He asked the police and his staff to investigate these people, who concluded that many on the list were involved in illicit activities. When the final tally of the dismissed, particularly at director-general level, was made public it was a professional and political earthquake. Hussen's campaign also eliminated over a thousand temporary daily

employees who had been added to the government rolls over the previous decade. Some of these people had no other sources of income, and their dismissal was particularly painful for the prime minister. This campaign did not even spare Hussen's older brother, a lowly employee in this category. The vast majority of all of those released from public employment were from the South.

The timing of the announcement was not accidental as parliament was not in session, and this gave the government until late April before legislators could challenge it. Meanwhile, the government prepared a cluster of bills, including the nationalization of retail trade and the dismissal bill, to be submitted to parliament when it reconvened in April. President Osman fundamentally supported the bill. Subsequently, the president received a petition signed by many of the senior people who were made redundant. In their petition the discharged officers claimed that their democratic rights as well as due process had been violated by the government:[57]

> "Every citizen shall have the right to address written petitions to the President of the Republic the National Assembly and the Government. Every petition which is not manifestly unfounded shall be examined." (Art. 10 of the Constitution).

The honourable members
of the Somali National Assembly — Mogadishu

c.c.
To: His Excellency
the President of the Republic — Mogadishu

Subject: PETITION

We the undersigned, officials and civil servants, have the honour to address you the present petition with the request that its content be taken in due consideration, in the light of our inalienable constitutional rights and in accordance with the existing laws regulating the "status" of the government civil servants.

1) The Government of the Republic has, with an act which we consider to be contrary to the spirit of the delegated law on the Establishment of the Civil Service, sent letters of communication to a number of civil servants informing that ". . . *because they have not been included in the new Establishment and in accordance with Art. 35 (4) of the Civil Service Law dated June 7, 1962, their service with the Government of the Republic has been terminated with effect from April 1, 1965 on grounds of redundancy.*"

2) According to the delegated law on the Establishment of Civil Servants, the Government of the Republic had already finalised the appointments of the Director General and equivalent positions, and subsequently that of Directors of Departments and equivalent positions in 1963, as per Decree of appointments by His Excellency the President of the Republic and published, on the

Official Gazette, and approved by the Council of Ministers as per deliberation n.0/25030 of January 9, 1964.

3) It is evident therefore that the "letters of cessation of service" served to a number of civil servants as referred to in point (1) above, and motivated by the fact that "they have not been included in the new establishment" [are], for a good number of cases, incompatible with the decrees duly signed by the President of the Republic and published on the Official Gazette.

4) The Honourable members of the National Assembly are, on the other hand, aware of the fact that new employments of daily paid staff, of personnel on probation and on contract have been effected concurrently with the dismissals referred to above and can easily realize that these employments have been made regardless of any principle of justice and equity and that they cannot be considered legally valid unless the conditions governing the public competitive examinations for vacancies in the Civil Service, as set forth in the Civil Service Law of 1962, are fully satisfied.

5) It is also evident that no reasonable criteria based on capacity, skillness, experience or educational qualification has been followed in the distribution and appointments for the highest positions in the Civil Service, which have instead been filled only to satisfy immediate political need thus risking to represent a dangerous precedent affecting the stability, independence and guarantee of the Civil Service. It is in fact not to be ignored that if such a system is allowed to be introduced, the Government will always claim the right to transfer or dismiss the Civil Servants regardless of the rights of the latter to a minimum of stability and safeguard in their administrative career.

6) To this effect the attention of the honourable Members of the National Assembly is called on the spirit of the Law on the Civil Service, of June 7, 1962, which was purposely emanated to guarantee the stability of the civil servants and in order to avoid that the Civil Service should become the passive instrument of political bargaining and interferences with all the imaginable dangerous consequences that can derive to the detriment of the civil servants.

7) As regards the new employments, the attention of the Honourable Members of the National Assembly is particularly called on the fact that while personnel enrolled in the Permanent Civil Service and occupying either senior or junior posts have been dismissed, new employments of pensioners (see Assistant Directors General) of daily paid personnel and contract staff have been effected thus causing a far greater burden on the national budget and in a way which is openly incompatible with any criteria of budget austerity which is claimed to have inspired the so called need for reduction of redundant personnel. We also consider that it is not equitable to allow the Government to engage certain elements as experts, as is the case of the Assistant Directors General with salaries amounting to more than double the salary of Directors General when it is known that the people enjoying these privileges ARE NOT EXPERTS and have no right to a special or different wage treatment, plus their pensions. These positions (Assistant Directors General) are not contemplated in the new Government and Ministerial Organisation as it can be evinced from the respective Presidential Decree of July 20, 1964 published on

the Official Gazette (Suppl. n.2 to n.9 of Sept. 3, 1964) and are also incompatible with Art. 36 (3) of the Constitution of the Republic which stipulates that "*. . . All workers shall have the right to receive without any discriminations equal pay for work of equal value, so as to ensure an existence with human dignity.*" It is our opinion that the high wages plus the pensions, paid to these Assistant-Directors-General cannot find a valid justification in the existing laws so far as the beneficiaries are Somali citizens like all other civil servants.

8) Finally, with regard to the "letters of cessation of service" served to a number of civil servants, the attention of the Honourable Members of the National Assembly is called on the fact that it has never been in the practice to dismiss top or senior civil servants when a reduction of personnel is to be applied, and also that while such reduction normally affects the lower grades of the Civil Service Scale, favourable conditions are usually reserved to that category of people as far [as] terminal benefits and other connected privileges are concerned. To our great surprise and dismay we have been witnessing to an unusual practice which has seen the majority of those dismissed from the service for redundancy being conveyed the "letter of cessation of service" with effect from April 1, 1965 only on Aril 5, 1965, while it [is] universally known that our Labour Code prescribes that even to the "*domestic servants*" a minimum of EIGHT DAYS NOTICE must be given.

For all the foregoing reasons and whilst we call the attention of the Honourable Members of the National Assembly to the fact that the dismissals referred to in the present petition HAVE NOT YET been confirmed by His Excellency the President of the Republic (with whom the final decision rests) and are therefore not to be considered valid as far as the suspension of our salaries is concerned, we beg the Honourable Members of the National Assembly to discuss and deal with the problem, as a matter of urgency, and possibly as soon as the National Assembly begins its works in the forthcoming Session starting on April 28, 1965.

The undersigned civil servants, while exercising their right of petition in accordance with Art. 10 of the Constitution are confident that their case will receive full and immediate consideration and that light will be shed on the circumstances which have led to these unjust, illegal and arbitrary decisions affecting their rights.

We beg to remain, Sirs,
Your obedient servants

Mogadishu,
April 20, 1965
1) Dr. Mohamed Farah Siad
2) Dr. Ali Ahmed Omar
3) Mr. Hussen Dinle
4) Dr. Nicolino Mohamed
5) Mr. Omar Mohamed Lulaye
6) Mr. Ahmed Yusuf Mohamed "Shaffi"

7) Mr. Mohamed Uarsamo
8) Mr. Aues Scek Mohamed
9) Mr. Islao Mahadalla Mohamed
10) Mr. Nur Ahmed "Castelli"
11) Mr. Osman Scek Mao
12) Mr. Scek Issa Mohamed
13) Mr. Scek Said Mohamed
14) Mr. Jama Ganni Ahmed
15) Mr. Jeylany Scek Bin Scek
16) Mr. Ali Herzi Farah
17) Mr. Yusuf Mahamud Mohamed "Ama Yusuf"
18) Hussen Auale Uehelie
19) Dr. Mohamed Scek Ahmed "Jughe"
20) Mr. Mugne Gassim Scek
21) Mr. Mohamed Ali Nur
22) Kalif Sudi

President Osman received the petitioners in person on May 3, 1965. The applicants had hoped that he would support their cause given that the president was known to have had some problems with the language the government used in describing some of those made redundant. Unfortunately for the petitioners, Osman had already signed the decree that authorized their dismissal, and he told them that he could not help them, although he urged any who felt wronged to seek justice in the courts.[58]

Parliament was the last authority that could reverse the government's intention to make redundant those civil servants deemed unfit to serve. Individual petitioners lobbied their representatives while parliament was not in session and intensified their efforts once MPs returned to work. They submitted the same petition to parliament and then mobilized their network to pressure MPs into action. But the government was well prepared to fend off this challenge. Hussen organized his government's presentations in parliament in such a way that the most popular bills, in a list of twenty-three agenda items, were taken up first and the contentious items were left to the last. Among the popular bills was one allowing the government to support the family of deceased General Hersi and earmarks for pensions for the veterans of the Ethiopia-Somalia conflict of 1964. It appears that the prime minister's strategy was to exhaust the opposition with other details and some popular bills before they got to his administrative reform. Despite being outmaneuvered, the opposition was prepared when the dreaded items came up for discussion. Opposition within the SYL led the charge against the reform program and accused the government of thoughtless radicalism and cruelty. Among the fiercest critics were the former prime minister Sharmarkee and his ally Ahmed Allor. Despite all the accusations leveled against the prime minister by the opposition, none claimed that Hussen and his government

engaged in tribal politics in cleaning up the civil service. Reporting on the final debates, the American embassy summed up the deliberation this way:

> Each took several hours "to unburden themselves." However [Hussen] patiently answered each point and scathingly called attention to the failings of the "deputy who formerly occupied the place I am now holding," i.e. [Sharmarkee]. The votes on the civil service bills were respectively, 64–44, 72–38, 72–36, and 73–33, although the later vote on the Organization of the Government (with the extra Ministry of Communication and Transport . . . was a closer 58–46, and [Hussen] was over the hump.[59]

The passage of the civil service reform bills marked a major milestone in the effort to institutionalize professionalism in government work, but it was neither an easy task nor a finished product. Nevertheless, it signaled that a leadership with a different vision for the country was at work. Haji Bashir Ismail, deputy Speaker of parliament, summed up Hussen's qualities:

> [Hussen] is a tough man; many deputies believe he has been excessive in his zeal for reform, though not quarreling with his objectives. Many dismissed civil servants have been calumnied by insinuation of (unproved though likely) graft and disloyalty. Nevertheless the Assembly respects and praises [Hussen's] courage. He is the first prime minister to have had any.[60]

Having set a new standard for the quality of those in public service and taking the first steps in shifting the terms of engagement, Hussen and his team began to focus on the more arduous and mundane work of enforcing the laws and inducing a culture of accountability in state affairs. Hussen's government turned its attention to creating a culture of confidence in public service by going after three types of transgressions: establishing new work culture based on duty and efficiency; fighting corruption at all levels, from junior public servants to top ministers, and keeping it on the public's radar; and honoring professional division of labor between civil servants and political leaders.

The prime minister set a daunting example of the new standards of professional behavior. Hussen was known, during his ministerial days, as a tough administrator who was exceptionally punctual, worked very long hours,[61] and pushed for efficient response to legitimate public demands. He brought this standard to the whole government, and, as if to set a benchmark, he visited random ministries at the start of the workday and closed the gates to those, including the minister, who came late to work. The word went out that Hussen meant what he preached. Vigilance became the standard in public offices and in the use of public resources. In addition to respecting working hours, the new order demanded that government transport be used as was intended, only during working hours and in emergencies. The police were authorized to stop and inspect any government vehicle operating in nonworking hours to see if it had a permit to be on the

road. As a result of this initiative, government transport in the major towns of the country disappeared from the streets after work hours, and this had the immediate effect on public opinion that the new regime was a breed apart from the old one.

Fighting corruption was much tougher than taking vehicles off the streets, but the government faced the challenge with a new zeal. Four instances show the approach adopted. In the early days of his administration, Hussen took the matter personally and symbolically by conducting a lottery for hiring cleaners of public buildings in Mogadishu. The lottery was announced, and the crowd that gathered consisted of curious onlookers as well as applicants. Hussen stood on a makeshift platform and began randomly picking names from the container. To many it seemed surreal that the prime minister of the country was doing such a seemingly trivial task, while others appreciated his intent. Doing this in a central location in Mogadishu told the population that fairness and transparency was what the government was all about and that citizens should not expect less. Once the winners were announced they were given documentation to file with the personnel office in the city and told to report to their places of work.[62]

On a different scale, the auditing service of the government was put on new footing and began to coordinate with the investigative agency, the Criminal Investigation Department. One of the first joint auditor and investigative agency actions took place in Hargeisa. Over the previous year the police had noticed two government employees in Hargeisa who seemed to have a lot more money than they were paid and who took weekend trips to Aden (now Yemen). Mogadishu dispatched an auditor to Hargeisa to look into the affair. According to the American embassy reports,

> The auditor requested the books of the Regional Accountant, Mohamed Haji Ahmed, and the Senior Auditor, Ali Mohamed Warsame. Within a few days rumors concerning misappropriation of funds by these two men . . . , which sprang primarily from their several marriages since appointment to control Northern Region funds and their weekend jaunts to Aden[,] were confirmed. Mohamed was arrested and Ali suspended from duty during the investigation. Ibrahim Ali Liban, Comptroller of Customs at Berbera, who is slated to become the Accountant General at Mogadishu, has been designated to take charge of the investigation.[63]

There was no easing on this front, and similar investigations of corrupt practices at the civil service level took place in different parts of the country until the government's tenure came to an end.

The government challenged public employees who were suspected of misappropriating public resources and their offices, and the prime minister expected his colleagues in the political establishment to demonstrate ethical behavior

and practice as well. Thus, he closely watched his cabinet members' public engagements. Senior police investigators and the audit service carefully examined claims that cabinet ministers and underlings were involved in corrupt practices, and they provided the results of their investigation to the prime minister. After careful consideration of the report Hussen authorized the police to pursue the matter vigorously and conduct a more thorough investigation. In due course the investigators submitted reports on three senior ministers and one deputy minster: Awil Haji Abdillahi (also known as Anthony James) of Finance, Ismail Duale Warsame of Agriculture and his deputy minister Islao Mahadalla Mohamed, and Osman Mohamed Adde of Industry and Commerce. The national audit discovered that the minister of Finance illegally used 300,000 shillings from the postal bank in Burao for his election campaign in 1963–1964. The minister was made aware of the findings and was told he had one of two options: be fired by the prime minister or resign and save some modicum of dignity. Awil opted for the second option, but his resignation letter was mistakenly delivered to President Osman,[64] who forwarded it to the prime minister. Hussen promptly accepted the minister's resignation. President Osman urged Prime Minister Hussen to give the same options to the three others. However, the prime minister told Osman that he wanted to fire them and "not give them the satisfaction," but the president urged the prime minister "to invite them to . . . [submit their resignation] and advise them that they [should] put themselves at the disposition of the judicial authorities."[65] Several days later, when Osman visited him at his residence, the prime minister told Osman that he had asked the three remaining individuals to resign.[66] But the ministers did not do the honorable thing. Then the prime minister made his move and called them separately into his office. The first to come was Osman Mohamed Adde, the minister of Industry and Commerce. Hussen had known Adde since the 1950s when Adde was inspector of prisons and Hussen had been a political prisoner in Mogadishu. In addition, Adde was a distant cousin. The claim against Adde was that he was blocking tea imports so that his client, Hussen's first cousin (who was also involved in manipulating tea importation through the state's Trading Agency), could exploit the artificially induced shortage. Hussen confronted the minister with the evidence, but Adde denied any wrongdoing. The prime minister fired him on the spot.

Hussen's attention turned to the minister of Agriculture and his deputy. Ismail Duale clearly understood why the prime minister requested his presence. The minister came pleading and, given the decades of acquaintance between him and Hussen, the response was both humorous and biting. The prime minister told Duale that people in Hargeisa had already dubbed him "dhul cun" (land eater) during his governorship in that region because of his corrupt land practices. Now, as minister of Agriculture, the public labeled him "dhir cun" (forest

eater), because of kickbacks he received from exports of banned forest products such as charcoal. In jest, the prime minister told Duale that the dismissal was a preemptive act, before Duale became "dad cun" (people eater).

The announcement of these dismissals was political thunder like nothing previous in the country's short history. *Dalka*, the independent monthly that had been a constant thorn in the side of the government, was stunned by these groundbreaking developments:

> The important political development . . . has been the dismissal of the Minister of Industry and Commerce, the Minister of Agriculture and the Under-Secretary of Agriculture. . . . The dismissals were due to charges of corruption. This is an epoch-making development. No longer will the appointment to a ministerial post mean a license to rob. . . . Another important political fact is that the dismissal of a minister because he has been charged with corrupt practices is a development we could not possibly have expected from any of our prime ministers. The present Prime Minister has his faults—certainly many of them. But it would be neither fair nor honourable to deny him the support and praise he deserves for re-establishing the principle that even ministers cannot afford to be caught in compromising situations, involving the misuse of public funds or power of office. A third important aspect—perhaps the most important—is that the Attorney General's office has applied to the National Assembly for authorization to institute criminal proceedings against the two ministers and the Under-Secretary. Such a request must be moved in the assembly by a fifth of its members and must be approved by a two-thirds majority in a secret ballot. The request for the authorization to prosecute in respect of at least ex-Minister of Industry and Commerce is believed to have been submitted to the President of the National Assembly some months ago. The one in respect of the Minister of Agriculture was apparently submitted at about the time of or after his dismissal. . . . The general belief in informed circles is that the requests for authorization were kept from examination in the last session by the President of the National Assembly.[67]

A third major effort the government made that was central to its attempts to institutionalize division of labor and powers and to protect public servants from meddling by political leaders was embedded in the authority of the Public Service Commission. The establishment of the commission created new dynamics in the service by systematically, regularly evaluating government employees, creating transparent and predictable procedures for recruitment, promotion, demotions, and dismissals. Slowly, the insulation of this process from political manipulation became apparent. Ironically, many young educated Somalis who had earlier assumed that they would quickly rise to the top of the civil service because of their education began to feel that the new government would require from them not only qualifications but also experience and performance for promotions. The case of Abdirahman Nur Hersi was an instantiation of inflated expectations and

subsequent disappointments. Hersi had recently graduated from Columbia University with a master's degree in economics. Hussen was approached soon after he was appointed prime minister and asked to replace the Italian governor of the Somali Central Bank with Hersi, who held a midlevel position at the bank. The prime minister rejected this request, and Hersi, one of the young educated men the prime minister had earlier challenged to identify a cabinet that would gain approval from parliament, was dismayed by Hussen's stance. There were many similar instances across the bureaucracy.

The government respected the independence of the Public Service Commission. Two instances highlight the professional protection the commission afforded civil servants, even when they transgressed, and the government's readiness to abide by its rulings. The first case was that of *Dalka*, an independent monthly magazine popular among educated Somalis, and the anonymous author of a monthly column very critical of the government. The author seemed to have access to classified state information. An investigation was conducted to determine the identity of the author and the source. It was discovered that Yusuf Dirir, an economics graduate from a British university and a consul in the Somali embassy in Addis Ababa, was the culprit and had used the diplomatic bag to transmit the articles to his friends in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who passed them on to the editor of *Dalka*. With this information, the minister of Foreign Affairs intercepted and opened the suspected envelope without a warrant and discovered an article destined for *Dalka* with Dirir's signature. Dirir was summoned to Mogadishu. He stridently argued that the minister had no right to open his private letter, although he could not justify his wrongful use of the diplomatic pouch. The minister accused him of illegal use of state service and the publishing of confidential information. The case was submitted to the Public Service Commission, with a demand that Dirir be dismissed. After some careful deliberations, the commission reprimanded Dirir rather than discharging him. Understandably disappointed, the government, nonetheless, complied.

Hussen's government and its policies turned the Somali constitution and its democratic principles into reality in the political life of the country more so than any other country in Africa at the time. The division of labor between the executive branch and the legislature, between the political authority and the civil service, and the independence of the judiciary were remarkable achievements by any standards. Somalia's challenge was how to sustain and advance these wonderful democratic structures and political practices.

Nonalignment as a Democratic Practice

Somalia became a sovereign country at a time when newly independent countries in Africa and Asia confronted a world divided by the Cold War. Each Cold War

camp made every effort to win the support of as many of these nations as possible through whatever means necessary and without regard to the interests of these countries. As a result of this challenge, a group of nations unimpressed with this division of the world organized the Non-Aligned Movement, whose members sought to chart a neutral course of development. Among the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement were India's Jawaharlal Nehru, Indonesia's Sukarno, Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser, and Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito. Before independence the UN Somali Trusteeship government was active in the Afro-Asian movement that predated the Non-Aligned Movement and joined the movement once liberation was achieved in 1960. It seemed to the Somali leadership that the republic's nonaligned status would give the nation the opportunity to freely deal with all nations on the basis of mutual respect. But this wish was constrained by three structural factors that defined Somalia's postindependence context. First, the republic was committed to the principle of self-determination of Somalis in French Somaliland, in Somali Ethiopia, and the Northern Frontier Districts of the Kenya colony. Second, as a result of this first condition, Somalia needed to build its defensive forces but completely lacked the resources to do so. Consequently, it had to make a deal with either the United States or the USSR, the two global blocs, which challenged its desire for nonalignment. Third, Somali cultural orientation as an open and democratic political order was at odds with the opportunistic and sectarian elements of the political elite whose interest was more aligned with the wishes of the cold warriors. The interplay between these factors created serious dilemmas for the second republic.

How able was the leadership of the republic to navigate these treacherous political waters in the midst of the new experiment of building a vibrant democratic society? Hussen's government made efforts in three areas to be true to nonalignment while pursuing Somali national interest: continuing relations with both the East and the West after a military agreement was signed with the USSR, being a moderate force in the Islamic world, and upholding the ideals of the democratic constitution when sectarian elite groups abused these principles.

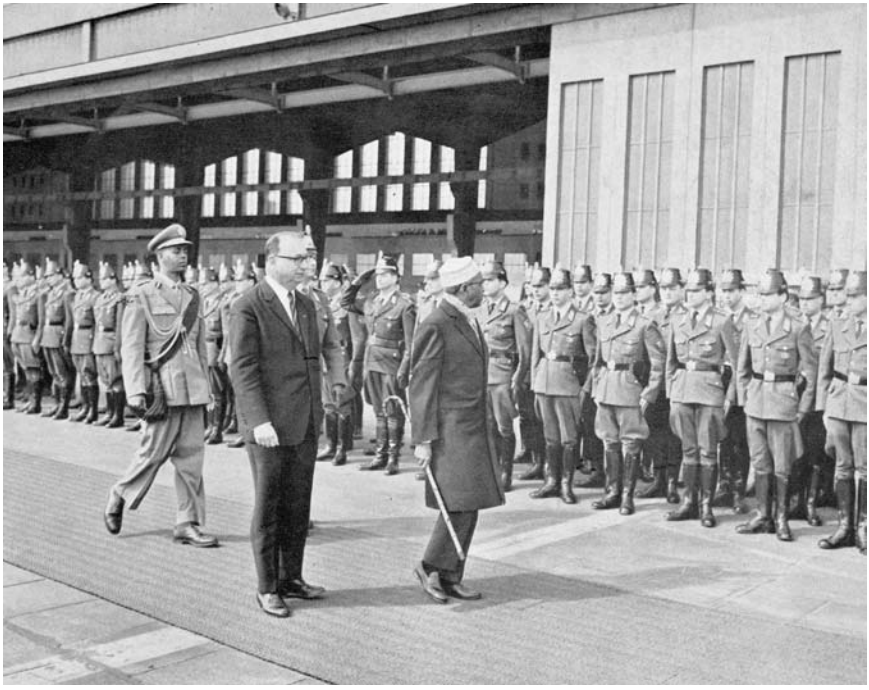
From the time the Somali-Soviet military agreement was made in 1963, the Soviets dominated Somalia's military establishment by providing substantial equipment for the twenty-thousand-strong force and also training the vast majority of cadets in Russia. The West assumed that Somalia was lost to the Soviets after the agreement was signed, but the democratic leadership of the second republic was not seduced by the Soviet's authoritarian order and recognized the agreement for what it was: a marriage of convenience for defense purposes. A clear demonstration of the independence of the Somali leadership was the replacement of Prime Minister Sharmarkee, who negotiated the agreement and who was considered by the Eastern Bloc as a friend, by Hussen, who many considered to be pro-West. The change of guard took place a few months after the

agreement was signed, and the new prime minister and his government pursued a reform program that was not inspired by the Soviet model. Hussen's government strove to establish an efficient administrative system modeled after Western democracies while working with the Soviets in the areas of defense and economic development. Two instances demonstrate that government policy was driven by its pragmatic outlook and core Somali values. First, despite the risk of alienating East Germany, a Soviet ally, Prime Minister Hussen and President Osman deeply empathized with West Germany's struggle for German unification. Osman's notes during his visit to West Germany and the Berlin Wall in 1966 speak movingly about the injustices imposed on the German people by the authoritarian order of the East. The West German government was so convinced of Somalia's goodwill that the German president asked Osman to lobby King Faisal of Saudi Arabia when it became known that the Osman was invited for a state visit to the kingdom. According to Osman's diary, the German ambassador delivered the request:

> Ambassador Nagel . . . wanted to see me this morning. According to what he said, he received a message from President [Heinrich Lübke] and Chancellor [Ludwig] Erhard, who entrusted him with beseeching me to check out with King Faisal during my visit with him if Saudi Arabia would tie itself again with [West] Germany and redo the interrupted diplomatic relations, without letting it be known that Germany suggested and asked it of me. I told him this would be rather delicate and that I do not have any intention to take advantage of the susceptibility of the host or to speak to him in the presence of others, but if it happens that I can speak to him alone, I will ask him only what he thinks about his relations with Germany and the Arab countries that broke relations after Germany recognized Israel and supplied arms. I told him that King Faisal could be inclined in his heart to follow Tunisia, Morocco, and Lebanon in their relations with Germany, but [Faisal] fears the reaction from the propaganda of Egypt and the other Arab countries, the so-called progressives, who would incite their populations against him. One should not forget that in his recent visit to the USA, King Faisal declared that "the enemy of Arabs is Israel and . . . who is a friend of our enemies is our enemy."[68]

Osman's willingness to act as an intermediary between Saudi Arabia and West Germany shows the government's commitment to nonalignment but also its support for self-determination even when it would alienate a Soviet ally.

While the West German government was not deeply disturbed by Soviet domination of the Somali military, because it believed Somali leaders had an independent mind, American administration views about the second republic were Janus-faced. They commented approvingly on the Somalis' clear commitment to democratic practice but believed that the Somali government had crossed a line



A West German honor guard receiving President Osman, 1966. Courtesy of the Ministry of Information, Somali Republic.

and created opportunities for their Cold War enemies. However, the evidence is that Hussen's government was staunchly true to the ideals of nonalignment. The American government wished Somalis would not support their brothers under colonial rule in Ethiopia, French Somaliland, and Kenya because this necessitated the Soviet-Somali military agreement.

America's stance on Somalia was in sharp contrast with its friendship with feudal Ethiopia, which treated most of its population as subjects rather than citizens. The issue of supporting a genuinely democratic Somalia was secondary to America's Cold War interests in the region, and thus American administrations failed to appreciate Somalis' sense of democracy and autonomy. This is best reflected in the exchange between America's ambassadors and officials with President Osman and Prime Minister Hussen. Some of the exchanges were quite blunt, while others were more diplomatic. One of the toughest exchanges between the president and the US ambassador took place in January 1964 during the war between Somalia and Ethiopia. The ambassador told the president



President Osman looking over the Berlin Wall, 1966. Courtesy of the Ministry of Information, Somali Republic.

that his government could not defend Somalia from its neighbors because Somali weapons had been found in the hands of Somali-Ethiopian rebels. In response Osman reminded the diplomat that the Somalis in Ethiopia fighting for their freedom were being massacred by Ethiopian troops using "weapons made in USA."[69] Ambassador Horace Torbert could not counter this rebuttal and said that the United States would try to help African neighbors understand each other better after the Somali election.

On another occasion, Osman lectured the American ambassador about the serious contradictions in American policy and its double standards as far as self-determination and democracy were concerned. Osman had in mind the contrasting ways America dealt with Germany's wish for unification and Somalia's same desire.[70] The United States fully supported German self-determination, which it rightly assumed would lead to unification, but considered the Somalis' desire for the liberation of the Somali regions of Ethiopia, Kenya, and the French Somali coast not as self-determination but as irredentist. Osman recognized that America's illogical position was because France, Ethiopia, and Kenya were its



President Osman greeting Somali Airline trainee pilots in Bremen, West Germany, 1966. Courtesy of the family of President Osman.

allies and that such relation trumped justice. The prime minister had to deal with similar matters, and his position was almost identical to that of the president. In one encounter, the American assistant secretary of state for Africa pushed Prime Minister Hussen to change his government's support for self-determination of Somalis in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Hussen responded to the secretary by pointing out the legitimacy of self-determination of all peoples under colonial control.[71] In an interview with *Time* magazine, Hussen articulated his government's position regarding Somalia's nonalignment: "Summarizing Somalia's neutral position, the Prime Minister proclaimed, 'We Somalis are neither pro-Eastern nor pro-Western, we are ardently for ourselves.'"[72]

Finally, democratic Somalia tried to play a positive and impartial role in the affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and Arab states. The recently formed Organization of the Islamic Conference asked the government of Sharmarkee to host its meeting in Mogadishu in 1965. Sharmarkee was delighted at the request and the possibility of showcasing Somalia among the Islamic world,

but he was also deeply worried that honoring the request might bring shame to the country because of the absence of conference infrastructure, the dearth of Somalis experienced in managing international conferences, and the paucity of resources to provide quality services to the delegates.

The responsibility of hosting the conference fell on Hussen's government in early 1965.[73] The first obstacle was finding a venue large enough and sufficiently well equipped to hold the general assembly of the conference. The only space that could be used was one of Mogadishu's private cinema houses. Cinema Nationale, located in the commercial heart of the capital and built by the fascist regime, had been off limits to Somalis before liberation. A leading Somali businessman bought the building after independence, and the government decided to rent this cinema hall to conduct the main conference proceedings. The seating was rearranged to suit the occasion and evening receptions and dinners were held in the two main hotels in Mogadishu, Juba and Shabelle. The Organization of the Islamic Conference brought its own secretariat, which relieved the government of providing one. Local arrangements were the responsibility of the republic, and the population rallied to give delegates a memorable Somali-style welcome.

The first international conference held in Somalia was not free from political conflict. Once the Organization of the Islamic Conference announced that the meeting would take place in Mogadishu, Egypt urgently asked the Somali ambassador in Cairo, Ahmed Kaisey, to go home and counsel his government against hosting the conference, because Egypt was concerned that "reactionary" governments like Saudi Arabia assisted by the United States Central Intelligence Agency were scheming to malign Arab progressive forces as un-Islamic.[74] Despite the many assurances the Somali government gave to Egypt, Nasser's government and its associates boycotted the conference. Hussen and his deputies took all the necessary precautions to ensure that the delegates remained within the agenda. The conference's success was a coup for the country and the government. After the conference concluded, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia invited President Osman to come to his country on a state visit, which he accepted. This news enraged Egypt even more because it considered Somalia part of its sphere of influence. Relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt were icy as the two fought a proxy war in Yemen. The Saudis supported the Yemeni monarch, while Egypt assisted those demanding change. Saudi Arabia was convinced that the Saudi king was a target of assassination, while Egypt assumed that Saudi Arabia, supported by the CIA, planned to eliminate Nasser by supporting the Islamic Brotherhood.

President Osman went to Riyadh and was well received. During his visit Osman made every effort to convince King Faisal to find a way to resolve his differences with Nasser and see their greater commonalties, but Faisal put all the blame on Nasser. In the course of his conversation with Faisal, Osman quoted the Somali proverb "Hadu walaalka kaadi badan yahey wa loo gogol badiya" to

urge tolerance. However, the interpreter translated the proverb literally as "If your brother urinates a lot then have a lot of padding ready for him," instead of relaying the proverb's meaning, which is "Have extra patience if you have a contentious brother."[75] Indignant after hearing the mistranslation of the proverb, the Egyptians considered Hussen's government as pro-Western despite Hussen's efforts to the contrary. Egypt retaliated a year later when Osman had to stop over in Cairo on his way to a state visit in West Germany. The lights of the VIP lounge in Cairo airport were all switched off during the president's brief stay there, and no Egyptian diplomat welcomed the president. Only the Somali ambassador to Egypt came to meet the president. Osman realized what the problem was, but he was amused rather than angered by the Egyptian behavior. It would take another year to reestablish relations between the two countries, when President Nasser invited Hussen to Cairo. Hussen told Osman about the invitation, and Osman told him to accept it. The prime minister was warmly received by Nasser at the airport and was exceptionally well treated during the entire visit. The Somali flag was hoisted at all the major Cairo landmarks. Hussen had explained to Nasser the mistranslation of the proverb, and it appears this was sufficient to restore good diplomatic relations between the two countries.[76] In addition, Nasser warned the prime minister that his government should not count on their Soviet friends to come to Somalia's aid and therefore must not alienate the Americans.

It is clear from all the available evidence that Hussen's government adhered to the basic doctrine of the Non-Aligned Movement as it tried to avoid the traps of the Cold War. Unfortunately, the major powers did not seem interested in the principled nature of Somali foreign policy and Somalia's effort to work with all countries and address each issue on its merit. The Soviets and their allies demanded an ideologically pliant regime in Mogadishu, while the West insisted that the regime should abandon its commitment to Somali self-determination as well as cancel the military support it received from the USSR. From the perspective of the cold warriors Somalia's position was untenable: the Soviets saw Hussen's economic, political, and administrative program as too democratic, and the Americans considered the Somali Republic a challenge to their agenda for the Horn of Africa. Thus, Africa's most democratic government had no supporters in either the East or the West because of its adherence to nonalignment. In the Islamic world, the principal fault line was between the Saudi monarchy, which was aligned with the West, and Egypt, which led the so-called progressive Arabs. These two countries had their supporters fighting in Yemen over the political future of that country, and it had been reported that Western intelligence, particularly the CIA, was fermenting Islamist sentiments in Egypt and portraying Nasser and his Arab allies as anti-Islamic. Hussen's government tried to play a constructive role in inter-Arab affairs and in the end avoided being associated with either the pro-Western or the pro-Eastern bloc.

The Presidential Election of 1967: A Momentous Turning Point

> We have the duty to educate our people and with this our representatives who are part of this population and it's certainly not the best thing to act illegally under the impulse of passion: according to me it's all about not accepting bribes of the representatives, always staying the course according to our convictions and letting the government fall until the representatives have convinced themselves that they cannot win with immorality. It is this steadfastness in the constitution and the legal business, which will straighten out things, and steadfastness can only be obtained by those who are not afraid to lose their position. The more that they confuse, perhaps unknowingly, their interests to stay in position, with the interests of the country and the people—this makes everything go backwards in the discouragement of the personality of the people that barely just got out of enslavement.
>
> —Aden Osman, diary, August 7, 1964

Challenges to Hussen's government were numerous, but the most daunting challenge was the constant political games played by a third of the members of the National Assembly at any one time, whose primary objective was to secure personal benefits. The prime minister confronted two major political problems that were symptomatic of the political dysfunctionality in parliament. The first problem involved the Speaker of parliament, who was accused of incompetence in managing parliamentary affairs and malfeasance, and the second problem entailed the destabilizing and unprofessional behavior of a significant number of the MPs. These problems came to a head in the spring and early summer of 1966 and would ultimately shape the outcome of the country's presidential election in 1967.

For quite some time there were rumors that all was not well with the Speaker of the assembly, Ahmed Mohamed Absiyeh, and his integrity was seriously questioned. Apparently the rumors had substance, and the SYL's central committee and its parliamentary group met in January 1966 to discuss what to do. After intense deliberation, on February 6 the committee decided to expel Ahmed Mohamed Absiyeh from the party. It then became necessary to move against him in parliament. Hussen reported the expulsion of the Speaker to Osman and the need to convene an extraordinary session of parliament, now in recess, to deal with the matter. President Osman was in agreement with the prime minister about the need to clean house, but he cautioned him that it was not necessary to call parliament into extraordinary session, because the case still had to be prepared and could be submitted to the assembly when it reconvened in April.[77] The prime minister insisted the case should be moved quickly, and the president of the National Assembly abided with the request, and so the session opened February 26, 1966. Contrary to expectations of the government, the SYL, and the fifty-one members who signed the request for the session, Absiyeh spoke for his defense:

> On the opening day, Absiyeh's initial move to retain his post was to make a plea on his own behalf, vigorously denying allegation about his inefficiency and incompetence that were listed in the ouster motion that was backed by 51 signatures. He attacked the Abdirazak [Hussen] Government and also claimed that its motion was illegal, as it had not been passed upon the National Assembly Standing Board, which has competence in such matters. President Absiyeh thereupon abruptly adjourned the February 26 session, sine die, without allowing government supporters to reply to the remarks he had made from the Assembly chair.[78]

Disappointed but not surprised by the Speaker's behavior, Hussen sought Osman's advice in case the assembly Speaker refused to reseat the house. Osman was incensed by the behavior of the assembly Speaker and told the prime minister that there were clear constitutional ways for proceeding:

> The response of the prime minister, in the possibility that Absiyeh does what Abdirazak [Hussen] fears, is for me that the assembly reconvenes and is presided over by one of the three vice presidents and discusses the motion that certainly will bring the firing of that man, even under the accusation of the normal dissolving of activity of the assembly, for which the Article 53 of the constitution provides the dissolving of parliament and the conditions for new elections.[79]

During the course of the day the parliamentary committee endorsed the legality of the motion, which the Supreme Court also sanctioned, and Ahmed then had no legal grounds to impede the process. On March 2, parliament was back in session and debated the case against its Speaker. Absiyeh realized that he could not hinder the process and consequently handed over the responsibility of the assembly to one of his deputy Speakers. Not too many MPs came to the floor to defend the Speaker, and on March 3, Hussen reported to Osman, by phone, that the assembly Speaker had been removed from office and that the tally of the votes was eighty-five for the motion and thirty-three against; one MP abstained.[80]

The search and campaign for his replacement ensued immediately. It appears that a number of SYL members encouraged Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, who was not a member of the ruling party, to seek the post, and Egal sought Osman's advice:

> By his request this morning, I received the honorable Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal. He asked me for advice: Some deputies, among them the head of the parliamentary group of SYL, outlined the possibility that he could be a candidate to the presidency of the assembly, without asking him clearly to leave the SNC and associate himself with the majority party. I responded to him that he should decline the offer but that he should make it clear that he is not ready, out of dignity, if the deal isn't implicit, to leave his party at least under these

> circumstances, in the hope to become president of the assembly, and that he could consider that option once he was hired after the elections. He seemed enthusiastic about the advice.[81]

We will never know whether Egal intended to join the SYL if he won the race for assembly Speaker as Osman had suggested to him, but he made a concerted effort in the campaign without a priori allegiance to the SYL. The election was held on March 8, 1966, and Sheikh Mukhtar Mohamed Hussein, endorsed by the government, received sixty-nine votes; Egal garnered forty-two; and a third candidate received four. Egal immediately called President Osman and told the president that he "was pleased with the democratic way in which the election took place."[82]

Hussen turned his attention to filling the posts of those cabinet members who were fired and decided to reshuffle his government. He completed this task on March 20, when the new cabinet took the oath of office. Table 6.5 shows some of the new members in Hussen's last cabinet. Once this change was accomplished, things went back to the daily routine of public service.

Egal's ambition was not derailed despite the setback in parliament. He had been restless for some time because he had not held a major political office in the country for several years. Recognizing Egal's abilities and his dilemma in being a member of small minority party, Hussen, who had his own increasing frustration with the unprincipled politics of a significant number of MPs, invited Egal for dinner sometime after the vote for Speaker of the assembly. Hussen declared that he was not interested in the premiership after his term ended and that Egal, as a most prominent member of parliament, had a good chance for leadership if he joined the SYL. Hussen nominated him for membership, and Egal was voted in. In his acceptance speech, he remarked, half jokingly, that many in the house would assume that he was joining the party solely to realize his political ambition.[83]

Table 6.5 Some members of Hussen's last cabinet

Name	Position
Sheikh Hassan Abdullahi	Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs
Haji Bashir Ismail	Minister of Health and Labor
Sheikh Abdirahman Haji Mumin	Minister of Defense
Abdullahi Issa Mohamoud	Minister of Industry and Commerce
Ali Omar Scego	Minister of Finance
Mohamoud Abdi Nur	Minister of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
Aden Isaak Ahmed	Minister of Communication and Transport
Ahmed Ismail Abdi	Minister of State for Planning
Osman Ahmed Roble	Minister Council of Ministers

Just about the time the prime minister thought his government had reasonably free sailing in managing public affairs he was shocked by the unexpected rejection of two minor bills in parliament. Osman was enraged by the shenanigans in parliament and how irresponsible many members were:

> The situation is grave of how things are going in parliament for the government of Hussen. Two years ago, I was compelled to give the country a courageous and honest prime minister, and today I do not regret how I acted, but now I am sick and tired of fighting with those irresponsible and corrupt so-called representatives of the people who systematically confuse their narrow-minded interests and their dislike of the interests of the country and the people; recently these interests truly do not give a damn! It's cowardly to not know how to take on with a high head one's own responsibilities and not limit oneself to be a "sniper" by means of the secret voting.[84]

A day after the president penned these words, Hussen's frustration with politics as usual crested, and he submitted his resignation.[85]

> June 25, 1966
>
> Your Excellency:
>
> It is well known that the National Assembly in its sittings of June 22 and June 23, declined to support the two Decree laws forwarded by the Government. These Decree Laws were: Draft Law delegating the Government the power to issue Civil Code, a Civil Procedure Code (including Sharia Law), Health Code, a Navigation Code, integrating and implementing the Labor Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and Traffic Code.
>
> The whole thing was a surprising affair; the Decree Laws were approved by the majority of the deputies in a show of hands after the approval of the committee concerned. The Deputies have in fact emphasized the importance of the laws, especially the Labor Code. What happened was that the Decree Law concerning the appointment of temporary staff was supported by 87 Deputies in the show of hands, but when the secret vote was conducted, 46 Deputies opposed and 41 were in favor. As for the combined Decree Law for which the Government asked parliamentary approval, the Government had invited 10 Deputies to study the Laws beforehand. The purpose was to share with the Deputies the responsibility of formulating legislation.
>
> Because of the incomprehensible way these laws were voted down, I can assure you that my Government believes it absurd to go ahead with its heavy responsibilities in this dim atmosphere created by the National Assembly and, for this reason, my Government does not intend to remain in office since it is the government which should initiate and enact legislation.
>
> Thus, I see that the only suitable step, your Excellency, is to submit my resignation. This itself is a rarity in a country full of problems and pressures, like Somalia, but my Government respects our parliamentary system and democracy.

> I cannot express, your Excellency, how to thank you in confiding and guiding me always. Please accept, your Excellency, my deep respect.
>
> Abdirazak Haji Hussen[86]

President Osman was not pleased with parliament's behavior and urged the prime minister to reconsider his decision. The prime minister requested that the president wait for a few days before responding to the letter. However, Osman was seething with anger and was impatient to resolve the crisis. Osman ignored the request and told the prime minister that there was no reason to wait. A day later the president's reaction to the resignation was made public in the form of a press statement.

> June 27, 1966
>
> Dear Prime Minister,
>
> I received your letter dated June 25, 1966 in which you offer the resignation of the Government headed by you, following the rejection by the National Assembly of two Bills of Law.
>
> First of all, your gesture and that of your Government has my sympathy, and I fully appreciate your feelings and those of your colleagues, considering the reasons which have prompted your decision.
>
> Despite this, you must allow me to draw your attention to the seriousness of the Government's resignation proposal at a time like this, when in the supreme interest of the country a government crisis is not desirable.
>
> You must also allow me to regard the rejection of one or more bills not as tantamount to the lack of confidence in the Government on the Parliament's part. This is a responsibility which Parliament can only take through a motivated motion of no-confidence, as clearly stated by article 82, para. 2 and 3 of the Constitution.
>
> In consideration of the above, I am asking you and your cabinet colleagues to reconsider your decision and to go to the National Assembly for its confidence.
>
> I hope, dear Prime Minister, that you will identify yourselves with the present difficulties, and that you will give Parliament a chance of taking its constitutional responsibilities.
>
> Please, dear Abdirazak, rest assured of my esteem and consideration.
>
> Aden Abdulle Osman

Osman's strategy was to put pressure on parliament, and Hussen reluctantly agreed to request a vote of confidence. Once the president and prime minister were in agreement, responsibility shifted to the SYL. At an urgent SYL central committee meeting the decision was made that all SYL MPs who were in Mogadishu would take part in the vote of confidence, which would be open rather than secret. The party also decided that no parliamentary member present at the vote

would be allowed to abstain or vote against the government and that anyone who failed to abide by the party's instruction would be expelled from the party.[87] Some SYL members opposed to the government and backing Sharmarkee for president were not daunted by this threat, but they met some hours before parliament convened and decided that Sharmarkee should vote for the government to protect him from expulsion and safeguard his presidential candidacy. Parliament started its proceeding on July 12 and much of the day was taken by the opposition who criticized government for all sorts of things. Late in the day, when the voting came, the SNC, SDU, and thirteen members of the SYL voted against the government, but the government prevailed with 74 votes out of 108 MPs present. Among those who gave a confidence vote were all HDMS members present and Sharmarkee.[88] The party followed through with its threat and expelled the renegade thirteen from the party.[89] The government's victory was considered to be a triumph for Somali democracy:

> The crisis emphasized again, if we need reminding, how critical in Somali politics is the role of the president of the republic. Aden [Osman] gave the full authority of his office in support of those who believed a government crisis at this time was not in the best interest of the Republic. He reacted neither precipitously nor thoughtlessly, but when he called for Abdirazak [Hussen] to withdraw his resignation, his request was so phrased that any Somali would have been hard pressed to refuse him. Aden may not consider himself indispensible, but he is a rare breed, here or anywhere. . . . [T]he government crisis offered an insight into the core of Somali political Life. . . . [T]hroughout the crisis the search for a solution was made in responsible, constitutional terms. No responsible Somali proposed a *deus ex machina* by the Police or Army to straighten the mess. The gut strength of the democratic process was so taken for granted during the crisis that even the most critical local pundits had not considered this aspect worthy of comment. We are required to admit again that despite the peregrinations of political life in Somalia, its parliamentary institutions and procedures appear soundly based and the democratic way indeed a way of life.[90]

Despite this recognition of Somali democratic practice,[91] Osman and others were certain that this last incident was not the end of the destabilizing efforts of certain MPs. These democratic leaders saw that the fly in the ointment was those MPs who exploited the democratic process for their personal gain without regard for the nation. It appears that Osman, Hussen, and many dedicated SYL members saw the existence of a mismatch between efforts made to institutionalize the democratic process, the prevalence of the open and dialogue-based Somali tradition, and opportunistic political agents who abused legitimate avenues of parliamentary procedures. Important signals that unnecessary instability would continue in parliament were the unwillingness of opposition political parties to

honor what it meant to be loyal opposition and the tenacity of a quarter of the ruling-party MPs to unconscionably subvert their own government.

A myriad of concerns confronted Hussen's government during the remaining year of its tenure. Among these were the forthcoming independence referendum in French Somaliland, making progress on the economic front, and the management of relations with Ethiopia and Kenya. But none would prove more crucial than the presidential election of 1967. As if to signal what was to come, former prime minister Abdirashid Sharmarkee began to undermine whatever effort the government made:

> Abdirashid has announced his candidacy in the election for the Presidency of the Republic, slated for July, 1967, and reportedly received assurances of financial assistance for his bid from the USSR, [United Arab Republic], and [People's Republic of China]. Increasingly in the Assembly sessions beginning in April, Abdirashid opposed legislation proposed by the SYL in the party caucuses and on the floor of the Assembly for the sole purpose of discrediting the Abdirazak [Hussen] Government, and, indirectly, Abdirazak's principal supporter, President Aden [Osman]. He supported in the Assembly a number of private bills which the Government opposed.[92]

Sharmarkee fired the first shot of the presidential campaign almost a year early. In contrast Hussen strove to deepen the democratic roots of government institutions while often thinking about leaving the prime minister position as early as matters permitted. Similarly, Osman was more focused on ensuring political stability and the functionality of democracy rather than worrying about mobilizing for another full term. At the time Sharmarkee was making these steps, Oman noted in his diary,

> As far as I am concerned [with regard to the presidency] I do not consider myself indispensible, nor do I see myself as understood or followed, for which I feel useless as a head of state and therefore I don't see why I should prolong my stay here, after having finished seven years of work, widely sufficient [and escape the] . . . the burden and honors.[93]

Even as late as November of 1966, Osman was not itching to remain president. He responded to a local journalist who asked if he would seek reelection,

> During all my life I have never said please elect me, nor will I do it now, because the Presidency is a post of trust and requires a great deal of responsibility. The election of the President of the Republic must be left to the decision of the members of the parliament who are solely responsible to elect a just man in the interest of the country and of the citizens.[94]

Sharmarkee left no stone unturned in raising campaign funds and wooing MPs to his side long before Osman became a candidate. He toured the Eastern Bloc

in November accompanied by two MPs, Haji Ali Ghedi (of SYL) and Ahmed Allor. Shortly after his return he began meeting with MPs. Sharmarkee is said to have received much support from the Eastern Bloc, according to the American embassy:

> Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] has obtained from his trip, the funds he sought, with the result that bidding for deputies' votes may go as high as So. Sh. 100,000 each. Acting PM Abdukadir Mohamed Aden "Zoppo" commented to the Ambassador that the SDU [Somali Democratic Union] money obtained by Yusuf Osman Samantar "Berdaad" from the Italian Communist Party will also be used in the campaign against the government.[95]

Meanwhile Sharmarkee began to build a team among MPs by not only providing cash payments but promising posts to some of them in his future administration. A key figure among these was Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, who was granted the premiership in advance and in exchange for his support. The logic behind the Sharmarkee-Egal team was that they could woo both the East and the West to support the campaign. Since Sharmarkee and others were already working with their Eastern Bloc contacts and the Italian Communist Party, Egal was dispatched to seek the support of his Western friends in early spring. He approached the American embassy, as reported by a US diplomat:

> Mohamed Haji Ibrahim telephoned [the US embassy] the morning of April 17, 1966, to request if we might talk. Egal arrived at my home about 6:15 p.m., was en route to a dinner at the Syrian Embassy. Egal asked if I'd relayed our earlier conversation to the Ambassador. I replied I had and the Ambassador had commented that it is not proper for the United States to intervene in the internal affairs of another country. President Aden [Osman] is a fine man and it would be inappropriate to contribute to his defeat. If Egal became Prime Minister after the elections, the United States would seek to cooperate with his government. Finally, if Egal did become PM he would be assured America would not work behind his back for his subsequent removal from office. Egal said he respected this attribute and believed it fair. . . . Egal nevertheless went on to outline his plans for the campaign and the policies and personnel of the new government. From what he said, his government would press for a reconciliation between Somalia and Ethiopia and generally turn attention away from militant Pan-Somalism.[96]

Diplomatic rhetoric aside and given the well-known fact that America regularly intervened in the internal affairs of countries whose policies it found disagreeable, American policy makers recognized Osman's aversion to communism but also his well-established and deep nationalist character, and therefore, the diplomat's reply to Egal's query might not be diplomatic nicety only. However, and despite appreciation for Hussen's efforts to clean up the administration and play by democratic rules, there were concerns about his tough nationalist attitude

toward Ethiopia and how this was not helpful to the American agenda in the region. This became clear on at least three occasions. First, when the prime minister was on an unofficial visit to Washington, D.C., to check with a doctor who had operated on him three years earlier the assistant secretary of state for Africa, Joseph Palmer, made a courtesy call. They had a very difficult discussion that went nowhere. The central issue was the conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia over the Somali region in Ethiopia. Secretary Palmer concluded by "warning that attempts to change frontiers by forceful means (i.e. including guerrilla action) could only lead to serious deterioration of US-Somali relations. Hussen promised to consider carefully points made by Palmer but from the tenor of the conversation this is likely to be mere politeness."[97] Second, Somalia's strict neutrality in the Cold War did not sit well with the Soviets or the Americans. Both superpowers wanted more loyalty from countries such as Somalia, but the prime minister made clear in his *Time* magazine interview in October 1966 "what non-alignment meant to his government."[98] The third instance that did not endear Hussen's government to the Americans was the praise for the People's Republic of China and North Korea by the Speaker of parliament after leading a parliamentary delegation tour to the two countries. More importantly, and two months before the election, a major and untimely diplomatic blunder by the government might have further alienated the United States. North Korea, in search of strategic advantage in the Horn of Africa, sought diplomatic recognition from Somalia. A large parliamentary delegation remained in Mogadishu for weeks to put pressure on the minister of Foreign Affairs. He gave in to North Korean pressure and told Hussen that he had promised them recognition after the election.[99] Americans took note of this development[100] and at least one of that government's agencies, the CIA, is alleged to have provided support for the Egal-Sharmarkee team.[101]

While the Sharmarkee-Egal campaign was busy collecting funds and entertaining MPs, Hussen made a long-awaited tour of Somalia's regions and started the journey in the northwest of the country. Many interpreted the visit as an important part of Osman's campaign for a second term as president. Hussen visited Hargeisa, Zeila, Berbera, and Burao. Huge crowds enthusiastically welcomed him. According to an embassy reporting officer who shadowed part of the prime minister's journey,

> From the moment he stepped from his DC-3 . . . to the time of his departure from Burao, the Prime Minister maintained a brisk schedule. In fact, so much was laid on that neither he nor his ministers could fulfill it. Nevertheless, he did get to Zeila and Berbera and met hundreds of persons in Hargeisa at offices and receptions. . . . A large buffet supper on the roof of the new Oriental Hotel provided the reporting officer with his only close contact with the prime minister with the Consul's consort being the only lady present.

> Abdirazak [Hussen] graciously extended an invitation to join his party. His warm, engaging conversation was a welcome contrast to the chilling night air. He seemed quite pleased with the reception Hargeisa had given him. . . . Politicking for the President and dealing with grievances of the hospital staff were major problems for the visitor, but the larger question to be answered in the North was the Prime Minister's position vis-à-vis Ethiopia and Djibouti. Abdirazak displayed his concern in unequivocal terms by journeying to Zeila and by giving the issue prominence during his one major address. Speaking to a large crowd in Hargeisa's Independence Garden, he reassured the people that their government's stand was courageous and firm. His main points were . . . [t]he Ethiopian threat[:] . . . a) Emperor Haile Selassie has said he will take over Djibouti by force if the French leave. b) Radio Addis Ababa is slandering your leaders daily and is urging you to "kill me now that I am in your midst."[102]

Overall, Hussen's national tour was a smashing success in galvanizing the population. It certainly demonstrated Hussen's charismatic capacity to connect with the population and the open and intimidation-free relations between the population and the leadership of the republic. The democratic bond between the population and the leaders was best manifested by one instance during the visit. This was reported by the UN Development Programme representative in Somalia who traveled with the prime minister:

> Throughout the tours, the Prime Minister was warmly and enthusiastically received by both the population and local officials. At some point, in a typical Somali fashion, local chiefs gave the head of Government a difficult time with their insistent demands for more and better schools, dispensaries, water supplies and roads. On one occasion, reported by Mr. Habib Ahmed, the UNDP Representative here, who was with the Prime Minister through most of the tour, a local chief demanded that Abdirazak [Hussen] put down a glass of water he was about to sip, asking how could he enjoy the luxury when the local people had nothing to drink but brackish water. The Prime Minister complied with the demand.[103]

The popularity of the tour notwithstanding, it appears that it had little effect on MPs who ultimately determined the fate of the Somali presidency.

Despite Osman's well-known reticence to seek another term and his unflinching opposition to asking others to support him, groups of MPs and other notables regularly visited Osman during the first six months of 1967 to offer their support in the campaign. Among the people who approached Osman several times and offered him monetary support was one of the wealthiest merchants from northern Somalia, Haji Ahmed Haji Abdillahi, known as Hashish. Osman noted in his diary, "Received the big northern merchant Haji Ahmed Haji Abdillahi Hashish. He asked me to accept starting now re-election, declaring himself disposed to send as much money as possible to see me re-elected."[104] Hashish

continued to implore Osman to accept his assistance and visited him three more times with offers of financial support. The final offer came on May 1:

> He said that he was 100% for me, and that he will work with certain deputies and that he is ready to donate—to give me Sh. So 100,000 to spend as I believe best. He exhorted me to have certain deputies come to me (Haji Yusuf Iman, Ismail Duale Warsame, Awil Haji Abdillahi) and ask them to support me! I thanked him, telling him, however, that I do not have need of any money because I find that embarrassing—not only that, but it is not useful to accomplish things by means of corruption.[105]

It is hard to believe that in the era of postcolonial politics the head of a Third World state declined these offers, but that President Osman was unlike any other Third World politician is clear in the rest of the chapter.

Among the distinguished individuals who tried to nudge Osman to jump into the fray were Ibrahim Oonlaayeh, Hilowle Macalin, Mohamed Ali Dhoore, Sheikh Mukhtar, and Mohamoud Abdi Nur (Juujo). Consistently, Osman's response to such offers was gratitude, but he always reaffirmed that they had to do what they thought was conscionable. Sensing Osman's diffidence, many of these supporters asked Hussen to exhort Osman to seek reelection, but the prime minister responded that he could not impose such a wish on the president.[106] Lobbying for Osman to run went on for several months, before the SYL annual congress met at the end of May 1967 and decided who to support for the presidency. There is nothing in Osman's diary to indicate that he had asked the SYL to nominate him as the party's candidate, and there is no evidence that he made an attempt to dissuade others in the SYL from nominating him in the party congress.[107]

Nevertheless, others, including the prime minister who was also the secretary-general of the party, decided to nominate him. Hussen confirmed that Osman never asked him to push his candidacy. There were seventy-seven members present, and the final vote was forty-four in favor of Osman and thirty for Sharmarkee, while three abstained. As a consequence, the party's central committee warned Sharmarkee that he could not run for president as an SYL candidate. Sharmarkee dismissed the ruling as he knew the vote was much closer than it appeared, since the thirteen MPs who had been expelled from the party and who did not vote in the party caucus were in his pocket. Osman's assessment of the vote was identical to those of his former prime minister, and he realized that the election was going down to the wire and that the winner of the contest would be the candidate who got the most votes from the opposition parties' MPs. Osman seemed exceptionally calm about all of this for three reasons. First, he had been in a tight race in 1961 and might now be thinking that he had a decent chance to win again. Second, given his conciliatory efforts to mediate between the opposition parties and the ruling party and government for a long time, he might have

assumed that many MPs in those parties would remember his fairness and be sympathetic to his candidacy. Finally, he had carefully thought about life after the presidency for many years and was comfortable with the prospect of not having the burden of his office on his shoulders.

Osman did not change his position or strategy and consistently told those who came to endorse him to act as their conscience dictated.[108] Consequently, it fell to Hussen and his cabinet to mobilize support in parliament. A large number of MPs were oblivious to the issues at stake in the presidential election, and were simply driven by their appetite for money or a ministerial post. For many of these MPs, this was not a contest between ideas, the records of the two candidates, or competing national agendas. On the contrary, their vote became a commodity, plain and simple, to be sold to the highest bidder and without the sanctity of a commercial or legal contract. In other words, any promise had a momentary shelf life and was subject to incessant bidding. Sharmarkee's campaign deployed significant cash inducements, offers of ministerial and other positions, and protection from prosecution for four MPs accused of high-level corruption. The former Finance minister, Anthony James, was an example of those promised refuge from justice. James sent emissaries to Hussen to say that, in his heart, he preferred to vote for Osman because he disliked Sharmarkee, but he needed assurance that he would retain his parliamentary immunity. Rather than entertain James's plea, Hussen was confident enough that he decided to take the matter of four of the seven MPs accused of corruption to parliament.[109]

> [On April 30] Prime Minister [Hussen]'s willingness to seek authorization from the Assembly to prosecute four deputies at this time is interpreted by many Somalis as indicative of the strength of the Aden-Abdirazak team . . . in the impending balloting for President in the Assembly.[110]

Unfortunately, the Speaker of the assembly was not keen to take up the matter, and consequently the four MPs escaped justice, which ensured that all of them would vote for the Sharmarkee-Egal team.

Hussen and his team knew that they were seriously disadvantaged financially and otherwise and thus faced a serious moral dilemma. They could either abandon their commitment to the civic ethos they fought so hard to establish and play the money game or face an almost certain defeat and with it the risk of losing the democratic project. In the end, Hussen decided to provide some cash inducements for those MPs likely to vote for Osman but who were tempted by the other camp. In addition to handouts drawn from the ordinary discretionary funds of the Ministry of Interior[111] and the prime minister's special fund, Hussen authorized an additional 200,000 shillings to have a chance to stay in the race. These inducements might have kept a few MPs in Osman's fold, but most were not a match for the slush fund of the Sharmarkee-Egal team.

A further liability for the Hussen regime was the impossibility of accommodating particularistic political demands by MPs. Characteristic of intraparliamentary politics, members who came from the same region or electoral district competed for the same ministerial post and other scarce resources. Each tried to outmaneuver the other, and failing that, each attempted to deny the other any post. The only acceptable scenario was if both MPs gained similar appointments or none (a zero-sum affair). Once one became a minister, the other joined the opposition. For instance, Hussen thought highly of the administrative capabilities of his Interior minister, Zoppo. Juujo, who was also from the same region, had to be accommodated as minister without portfolio and then as minister of Agriculture to keep the Upper Juba deputies on the government's side. In the end, the entire Upper Juba delegation, with the exception of two members, asserted that they would support Osman's presidency if Hussen promised them that Zoppo would not be a minister in his future cabinet. Hussen was in no position to make such a pledge since he was not interested in the premiership and, more relevantly, had no idea whether Osman would even reappoint him. He added that they should come to him only if Zoppo had abused his position at Interior to punish his political foes. The delegation never took up the challenge, Juujo, the minister of Agriculture, and one of the men who tried to convince Osman to seek reelection had secretly agreed with Egal to vote for Sharmarkee. A member of the Upper Juba delegation, Gaaytano, informed Hussen that Juujo had tried to convince Gaaytano to support Sharmarkee. Incidentally, Sharmarkee and Juujo had been political foes since Sharmarkee's premiership years.

As the day of reckoning approached, streams of delegates from parliament as well as from the region saw Osman, offering him their support. The president thanked them but kept aloof, not certain about some of the visitors' integrity. Hussen and his team were hopeful, but Osman realistically calculated that he was unlikely to win since he was not willing to play by corrupt means. One of the issues that vexed Osman was not only the money that many MPs demanded but the compromising political deals his opponent had engaged in. A key factor in this was the promise Sharmarkee made to Egal regarding the prime minister position. Osman was approached several times by northern delegates and MPs who besieged him to promise to appoint a Northerner as prime minister. The most conspicuous example of this was a group of about eighteen MPs from the North who came to see the president on March 6:

> From 9 to 10:15 I had . . . in the office the Hon. Haji Yusuf Sheikh Osman, preannounced to me by Osman Ahmed Roble. I had a half hour of time, but I could not disengage myself before an hour and a quarter: he and at least another 18 deputies from the North want me to remain as president of the Republic

> for another six years, because they do not trust Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] and they don't see anyone else "in the field" who could adequately substitute for me. There is, however, according to him, Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, to whom Abdirashid and his supporters had promised the post of prime minister if Abdirashid was elected president, and thus it had been decided to put Egal and Abdirazak [Hussen] in contact, etc., etc. I responded, as usual, that I do not desire reelection, adding my motives. I said that there are men besides me and Abdirashid that could be found worthy, but that, in any case, it is not my character to make a bargain on the question, even if I were enthusiastic about getting reelected, and we should not speak now of this, since I will return to the position only if it is imposed on me by those who believe that the country still has need of me. Haji Yusuf also spoke as if I myself could designate my successor, but who would listen to me?[112]

The persistence of this type of lobbying manifested two character flaws of a significant number of MPs and the population at large. First, although a slim majority of MPs recognized that the president was not a partisan leader, as most aptly demonstrated by Egal seeking Osman's advice about his political future, most of them could not fathom the president's unflinching attachment to the national interest and therefore his unwillingness to engage in horse trading that would compromise his deeply held convictions.[113] Second, most of them could not grasp Osman's political courage and his willingness to fight MPs in order to protect public interest even when this could cost him votes in the forthcoming presidential election. Such audacity was on display in January 1967 when parliament began to discuss a bill that would give MPs who failed to get reelected 24,000 shillings:

> In the National Assembly they are discussing a law initiated in parliament . . . that is aimed at obtaining a payment of 24,000 shillings for each of them who is not reelected in case of new election. I do not yet know if the enormity is limited to the payment or if there are also other "instances" in the law, but I remember that initially the "enlightened" Hon. Giudicino had sketched the law for completely different ends from that of the payment: pensions, an increase in the daily allowance for foreign and interior missions, tokens of presence, indemnities for lodging, these were the currents running through the project! There is no doubt that those "worthy representatives of the people" will approve the payment, but what will I do? There are those who delude themselves that I will not have the courage to ask for a rediscussion and deliberation, because of the upcoming presidential election, but they are making a big mistake if they think about me that way.[114]

Its advocates pushed the bill through, but the president was able to block it from becoming law. This was the second time he had returned such a law to parliament during his tenure.

Osman reflected on his partnership with Hussen when an MP, Hilowle Macalin, came to reassure the president about his vote in the forthcoming election:

> Hilowle, who did not view my choice of Abdirazak [Hussen] in 1964 approvingly, is now an admirer of the young prime minister because of his honesty, his courage, and his rejection of nepotism and tribal partisanship! And I am happy about this because Abdirazak deserves it. Some men take the reins of power when others have great faith in them, and they finish by having disillusioned these same others who now know them better. This was the case with Abdirashid [Sharmarkee]. Others start out with the skepticism of others and even hatred by some, but later they succeed in proving that they are much better than what was believed. This is the case of Abdirazak Haji Hussen, who, when I chose him, had almost everyone against him, while now they highly praise him, and it is justified.[115]

As the campaign finish line approached, Hussen's team left no stone unturned and was mildly confident that their candidate would win. Meanwhile, Osman remained stoic during the final push. It appears from his diary that during the month of May much of his attention was mainly focused on the war in the Middle East, although he was not oblivious to the inability of most MPs to appreciate his commitment to the national cause and the democratic constitution without favor or fear.

Supporters of both candidates were exceptionally nervous the night before Election Day, and some of these supporters worked through the night. Hussen received three uninvited visitors at sunrise on Election Day. Two were friends and one was a family member. The first two were Haji Bashir Ismail, Hussen's defense minister, and Salaad Abdi, who hailed from Gardo and had been opposed to Sharmarkee. The third, Osman H. Hassan, was a relative of Hussen through marriage.[116] The first two came together and the third joined them a few minutes later. All three claimed that they came to reassure Hussen of their support for Osman and had tea with the prime minister. After enjoying the prime minister's hospitality for two hours, they drove to parliament with Hussen in his official car.

The appointed hour came at 10:00 and MPs took their seats, and the gallery of the chamber was full of citizens. Sharmarkee took his seat as an MP and was entitled to vote for himself, while Osman remained in the presidential villa as he was ineligible to vote, but he followed the proceeding via the live program over Radio Mogadishu. At 10:10 parliament appointed three vote counters, Ali Alio Barre, Salaad Abdi Mohamoud, and Mohamoud Issa Jama, and five observers from the five parliamentary parties.[117] It took nearly two hours to go through three ballots, as neither candidate won a two-thirds majority in the first vote. In the first round of voting, Sharmarkee received sixty-three votes and Osman fifty-seven, with three illegible ballots annulled. The six-vote difference between the

two candidates was accounted for by the four ministers who had escaped justice in parliament and a few of Hussen's ministers who betrayed their own government. In the end Juujo voted for Sharmarkee and was appointed minister in the Egal regime, only to be unceremoniously fired shortly thereafter while he was on an overseas trip.[118]

Another case was that of Aden Isaak, who had served in two major ministerial capacities in the Hussen administration. He was engaged in double-dealing and was worried about the possibility of his fellow district MP, Abdi Hassan Booni, overtaking him. His proclaimed commitment to Osman was belied by his betrayal when it mattered: he voted for Sharmarkee and retained his ministerial post in the Egal regime.[119] In contrast to these deceptions, those who voted for Osman refused to be bought and apparently held the prime minister and the president in high regard. When the Speaker of parliament announced Sharmarkee's victory a deputy from Eil held up his pencil and declared with trepidation, "Fidmoy kow" (First trouble).

Osman's reaction to the loss was one of relief: "The government that was my supporter was tricked by people that made it believe to be on my side, but as far as I'm concerned, I consider the result[] as a blessing for me, that lets me return to be free without having to bow down to anyone!"[120] Sharmarkee came to the presidential villa, and Osman congratulated him. Osman told him, "He'll have my collaboration if he wants it. I'm holding back my duty and that I owe it to myself and the country to calm down Sharmarkee who doesn't deserve high regard."[121] Subsequently, Hussen and a significant number of cabinet members came to see Osman the next day in a state of shock. It appears that Osman's primary concern was to ensure a smooth transition and to avoid the kind of political shenanigans that had accompanied his election to the presidency in 1961. According to his diary, Osman consoled his prime minister and others rather than being comforted by them:

> Received Abdirazak Hagi Hussen and other ministers, undersecretaries, and deputies: Kenadit, Aden Isaak, Sheikh Mohamud Malingur, Sheikh Abdurahman, Ahmed Iusuf Duale, Sheikh Hassan Abdulla, Hagi Bascir Ismail, Osman Ahmed Roble, Abdulkadir Zoppo, Sheikh Abdulle Mohamud, Badmah, Giasti, Mohamed Sheikh Mohamed Dahir, Mohamud Ali Dane, Aden Scire, Sheikh Ali Giumale, Mohamud Issa Giama, Agi Ugaz Iassin, and Agi Abdullahi Mohamed Ismail. All these friends came here to me in my house to comfort me, and instead it seemed that I had to comfort them, that when it's all done I had what I really wanted deep down, and that is to return free. . . . To the parliamentarians who came to visit me and especially to the members of government I exhorted them to have faith in the future of the country, to get rid of any ill will and prejudices toward men and situations that will emerge from the victory of Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee, since otherwise the interests

of the country will suffer, and we all should love and serve our country. I hope with all my heart that they will listen.[122]

Finally Osman, rather than wait until the last official moment, magnanimously offered to vacate the post so that the new president would have the honor to preside over the July 1 independence commemorations. He informed Sharmarkee and the Speaker of the parliament about his intentions, and on June 30 he resigned and the new head of state was sworn in immediately.

Making History

The Italians also don't like Abdirazak [Hussen] because he is not corruptible.

—Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, quoted in US Department of State, *Airgram A-675*, June 19, 1964

Somali democracy should be a model for other African Countries.

—Kenneth Kaunda, quoted in US Department of State, *Airgram A-234*, February 11, 1968

Osman was so strict with taxpayer public money that he saved enough from the presidency's annual budget to build a presidential retreat in Afgoi while others were pocketing public money. Hussen's respect for the law and his anticorruption effort has no parallel in our history. His hands are absolutely untainted and the two are peerless as Somali leaders.

—Ali Said Arraleh, interview by the author, Nairobi, July 2001[123]

June 10, 1967, marked the first time in modern African political history in which a democratically elected president was defeated in an election, gave up power with dignity, and walked away freely as an adored citizen. A year later President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia was visiting Somalia and remarked during the dinner held in his honor in Villa Somalia, "Somalia is quite different from the rest of the continent at least in one special way. Here I am flanked on the left by the former president who left office democratically after being defeated in the election and with him is the former Prime Minister. And to my right are the current president and his Prime Minister dining with their predecessors. This is a splendid sight that is peculiar in the rest of the continent. Defeated African leaders face one of three circumstances: they either flee the country to save their lives, or are in prison, or worse."[124] President Kaunda would not have known then that it would take almost a quarter of a century before the next democratic transfer of government, Somali style, would take place in Africa. That change of guard transpired in November 1991 in Zambia, which marked Kaunda's own defeat and resignation. Unfortunately, Kaunda's successor did not honor the defeated former president as Somalis did theirs, because he attempted to deprive Kaunda of his Zambian citizenship. Retrospectively speaking, the second republic was a

great time of experimentation and commitment to building democratic institutions unlike any in the African continent at the time.

Nine accomplishments stand out in the record left behind by the second republic. First, it was the first and the last Somali government since independence in which cabinet appointments were made on the basis of competence and not regionalism. Second, this republic has the honor of being the first and last Somali government to systematically staff civil service posts purely on the basis of merit and ethics. Third, Hussen's government was the first and last government in which the opposition political parties were given opportunities to use the public broadcasting system to challenge the policies of the government. Fourth, no other government in the history of the country systematically curbed corruption and dismissed senior ministers and civil servants for malfeasance. Somalia's most critical journalist, Yusuf Dhuhul, admitted as much in 1966 and in 1996 emphatically reiterated that the Osman-Hussen team led the best government the country ever had. Fifth, Hussen made African history as prime minister when he demanded that his new ministers declare their private wealth before taking office to ensure that they did not amass wealth while in office. As far as I can determine this is this first time any African president or prime minister demanded such transparency from his cabinet. Sixth, Hussen also became the first African leader to enact far-reaching civil service reform, unprecedented in African history, and establish a system of administration whose hallmark was merit, efficiency, and professional autonomy. Seventh, Somalis had political freedom that has not been seen since. Opposition members and individuals used the courts and civil servants used the Civil Service Commission to challenge the government when they felt or even imagined that their rights were violated. Eighth, Hussen's government staunchly maintained a nonaligned policy while minding the interests of the country. This was the last government that upheld the sovereignty of the republic by negotiating with world powers and others without becoming a client. This incredible record has yet to be digested by Somalis, Africans, and Africanist social sciences. Ninth, two democratic changes of government took place, one at its beginning and one at the end of the first republic.

Despite the second republic's trailblazing democratic record, little has been written about it.[125] Somalis have been tormented for over forty years by a dictatorship, warlords, tribalist fiefdoms, clientalists, pseudoreligious tyrants, and corrupt, incompetent transitional and federal regimes. Neither the large Somali diaspora nor the young generation in the country know much about this vital history, and both groups are surprised when they hear about a Somalia that led the continent in democratic practice and the high quality of its leadership. In addition, there is little in African studies literature inside or outside the continent that has dealt with this vital chapter in the political history of the continent.

7 The March toward Dictatorship, 1967–1974

> We in Somalia cannot boast of having done much in terms of ameliorating the quality of life of the people, but at least the people do not have a master, and those in power have been democratically elected by the same people even if it has been demonstrated that it is not efficient, but this is only because of inexperience and because of the lack of means.
>
> —Aden Abdulle Osman, diary, February 28, 1963

> His final comment was heartening in a continent of Caesars and tempted elites. "This dictator would never be Aden Abdulle, but it might be someone who came after me!"
>
> —E. A. Bayne, *Four Ways of Politics*[1]

The presidential transfer of power marked the height of Somali democratic practice. Osman appeared content with his new freedom as he watched, from his position in parliament, the foundational steps taken by the new men in power. At times he was delighted with some of the actions taken by the new leaders, while on other occasions their deeds deeply dismayed him. In essence, Osman remained an engaged MP, but he also stayed above political partisanship, respecting the dignity of his position as the founding president of the republic. In contrast, Hussen remained equally committed to his principles but openly challenged the regime when he thought its program was deficient or that it was trying to subvert the constitution and the democratic order.

The new men in power moved quickly to reorder the system in their image. Since they were aware that they had come to power by buying the votes of the majority of the MPs who elected them, they assumed other ambitious politicians might do likewise to drive them out of power. Consequently, the new leaders did not trust the very democratic process that brought them to power and went about changing it to perpetuate their authority, thus paving the way for authoritarian rule. This chapter narrates the story of that subversion and efforts made to impose personal rule over the Somali people.

Osman's Reflections on the New Regime

On June 30, Osman's tenure as president came to an end:

> This morning I resigned and had discussion with the staff to encourage them to continue to behave as they have done the previous seven years under my direction, and thanked them for their collaboration. I told them that in democracy it's right and normal that we alternate [people in] responsibility and that personally I am very happy to leave the job to others, and hope that they will find themselves happy as well.[2]

The following day, he took part in the July 1 celebration with the new president, who told the crowd that Osman was an exemplary founding father of the country. Osman left the presidency feeling relieved and confident for the country's future, but doubting the new men in power would put the nation's interest before their own political fortunes. In characteristic fashion, he offered Sharmarkee his complete support despite Sharmarkee not having been honorable in defeat when Osman fired him as prime minister in 1964. Osman also urged those who voted for him to be loyal to the country and to support the new government when it had the right ideas and remained true to the constitution. Shortly before he left office, the central committee of the opposition party, the Somali National Congress (SNC), made a courtesy visit to Villa Somalia. Although only four of the party's twenty MPs had voted for Osman, he urged the SNC to engage in constructive oppositional politics rather than opposing the new order at all costs. Others who visited Osman before he left Villa Somalia included the commander of the armed forces, General Siyaad Barre. According to Osman's diary, the general came to thank him and to reassure the president of the military's support for the government:

> He gave his congratulations and also those of all the officers of the army, accompanied with thanks and appreciation on how I behaved during the past seven years. We spoke for quite a while, and he told me . . . it had been reported that the army intended to stage a coup . . . before the first of July to not let Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] occupy the presidency, and that he had gone to Abdirashid and reassured him.[3]

Osman thanked the general for his kind words and urged him to support the new government.

It appears that Osman was less concerned about the military getting involved in politics and more worried about the shifting political winds as Sharmarkee began to think about forming a new government. The first step in forming a government was to appoint a new prime minister after engaging in the constitutionally mandated consultations with MPs and other Somalis of national significance.

Sharmarkee pretended that no decision had been made about who would be nominated as prime minister, but it was an open secret that Mohamed Ibrahim Egal was promised the premiership. Sharmarkee requested a meeting with Osman on July 2 without specifying its agenda. From Osman's diary, it is clear that Sharmarkee was only going through the motions of consulting with the former president about who to nominate for the premiership. What Sharmarkee did not know was that on June 21 Osman had already heard from the American ambassador that Egal was to be appointed as prime minister:[4]

> This morning at 10:00 am Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] came to visit me at home. He did not explicitly tell me what he wanted, but since I had received a letter from [Mohamed] Awale [Liban] that invited me to visit the new president for consultations, I think that Abdirashid came to visit me precisely for these consultations. I do not remember how exactly the discussion came about, but I told him to try Mohamed Ibrahim Egal if he wants.[5]

Three days later, on July 5, Osman met with the president and told him that he had heard that his team was thinking about forming a coalition government. He advised him that such a coalition was unnecessary since the Somali Youth League had a sufficient majority in parliament. Osman also urged Sharmarkee to include many of the good ministers of Hussen's government in the new lineup to avoid consolidating two oppositional camps within the SYL.[6] But it appeared that the new chief was not interested in these ideas.

Without much consultation Egal was nominated to the premiership. A day later Egal visited Osman and asked for his support in convincing the SYL to admit nonparty MPs into the SYL so they could be included in the new government. Osman gave him the same advice he had offered to Sharmarkee.[7] Subsequently, Egal met with the SYL's central committee, chaired by Hussen, and the governing party decided to honor his request that the thirteen former members who were expelled from the party earlier in the year be readmitted. But the prime minister designate was still not happy with the SYL's towering majority in parliament and later demanded that non-SYL MPs be allowed to join the party. Furious at Hussen's unwillingness to let him have his way with the party, Egal sought Osman's support:

> [Egal] came to me on board the PM Fiat 2300, although he is not PM yet as he has not formed his cabinet. He complained about the SYL and Abdirazak [Hussen]. I calmed him, explaining what Abdirazak's fears are: introduction into the party of other deputies who would get rid of the very loyal members of SYL who have been there from the beginning such as Abdullahi Issa and Mohamed Ali Dorre. I urged him to understand other members' reasoning and not to always suspect everyone, and to have patience. I also asked him not to just follow Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] and not be led by insupportable promises.[8]

A crisis was averted when Hussen and the central committee granted Egal his wish and allowed members of other parties to join the SYL. Osman was delighted about Hussen's willingness to entertain Egal's desire, but there was a tinge of worry about where this might all lead:

> Yesterday afternoon at 5:15 pm in the offices of the president of the assembly, Sheikh Muqtar, I met Abdirazak [Hussen] and others who called for the meeting. Abdirazak said that in agreement with at least 18 of the 23 central committee members they decided to satisfy Egal by opening up party membership to non-SYL MPs. Abdirazak is truly of a fantastic comprehension and generosity! I believe that he has acted very well in this matter, because in truth, to stand his ground in these matters risks losing face for himself and the party since you cannot count on the opportunistic deputies and those without principles, who could get to the point where they allow the formation of a so-called coalition government not among parties but among individuals without any political affiliation! For whatever reason that he did it, I raise my hat to Abdirazak who showed himself to be ever greater. It's a pity that so few have recognized his qualities![9]

It appears Egal was satisfied with these concessions, which brought the SYL a huge majority in parliament (103 out of 123). But this success had its downside, as Somalia's two top leaders had to deal with the incredible number of ministerial and payment promises they had made to MPs from all major political parties. Under incredible pressure to include as many MPs as possible in his government, Egal finally made his cabinet lineup public. He retained Foreign Affairs in addition to being prime minister. In all, the new cabinet was expansive and included seventeen ministers and ten deputy ministers for a total of twenty-seven. Such a cabinet size was much in excess of the last one. Ironically, Sharmarkee and Egal had been the most caustic critics of Hussen for marginally expanding his cabinet in 1964. They took Hussen to task for exceeding the constitutionally set cabinet size, but from their new vantage point the constitutional limit set for the cabinet size was secondary to the political prerogatives of the time. At any rate, Egal presented his government and its program to parliament for approval and for a vote of confidence.[10] A few MPs challenged some elements of the program, but the only major critic was Hussen before the debate was concluded on August 12. The confidence vote was taken and Egal's government sailed through with the overwhelming majority of 119 in favor. Three MPs were absent and only one person voted against the government program.[11] Egal's victory closed the curtain on the sectarian Northern Somali claims that Southern Somalis had no intention of accepting Northern leadership in the republic. This development signaled that postcolonial democratic politics was open to all Somalis who had the wits to forge a majority coalition. Osman spoke last before the vote, advising caution about a number of issues such as communal violence and the idea of

collective punishment (a throwback to colonial ways) and the need to protect the country's flora and fauna. Osman continued to give advice to those in authority when they sought it, but he remained deeply troubled by the politics of the new regime and worried for the country a great deal as he told a BBC Somali Service reporter at the end of July:

> I have faith in the country, but everything depends on the people; that in spite of everything[,] I do not maintain that force should be used in the Somali occupied lands and that one should not lose patience trying to resolve the problem; *that without democracy nothing good can happen*; . . . that there has been a lot of disappointment since Mohamed Haji Egal and whoever else with him made the choices did not respond to good will.[12]

One of Osman's last interventions in August was in a brief discussion in parliament regarding the deeds of the country's former Foreign Affairs minister, Ahmed Yusuf Dualeh. On August 14 the former minister and an accomplice were arrested by the police for allegedly carrying classified documents to be delivered to their Ethiopian embassy handlers. On August 16, parliament held a long and acrimonious discussion about the case of the former minister. Osman noted,

> The discussion of the arrest of the ex-minister of Foreign Affairs was lengthy and heated because of an error made by the president of parliament, Sh. Moctar, who claimed the events necessitated limited questions to be put to the government on the case and after the reply of the government that no one would be allowed to speak! . . . Egal has not brought anything new and therefore there was still much to argue about, but for the lack of will to not appear to defend the traitor, no one wanted to speak. I, however, had to speak and criticized Haji Mussa Bagor, who in his speech stigmatized anyone who would try to defend a man who was considered guilty of being a traitor only because he was a deputy. Haji Mussa either did not understand anything or he spoke in bad faith because no one defended the accused but only tried to understand the truth of the justification of the arrest in relation to the immunity of parliamentarians.[13]

Osman remained focused on protecting his stature as a former president, but he also did not waver from telling the new authorities what he thought of their ideas and actions. As an MP Osman adjusted to his new role with great ease and the American ambassador recognized Osman's exceptional qualities when he met Osman at a reception at the Italian embassy.

> [Raymond] Thurston (USA) came up to me with Vitali, and he told me, approximately in Italian, "You are a man who knows how to adapt to all situations without problems, one does not often meet men like this in the world." "The position, even if it is big, never went to my head," I responded, "nor do I have a tragic character, but I do not believe that it's good to dance intimately with injustice and distortions in all of their forms."[14]

Osman enjoyed his new freedom by often taking walks in various areas of the city and traveling freely outside Mogadishu. As Yusuf Dhuhul noted in his remarks nearly two decades later, such freedom was possible because the Osman-Hussen team lived by the country's democratic constitution, and at no time while in power did they use state power to punish their political opponents.[15]

The Lone Voice for Democracy

> Abdirazak[Hussen]'s character as a tough minded, fair and enlightened leader was noted by many. His friends say he is firm, but fair. His enemies say that he has the makings of a tyrant. Nobody disputes his courage, nor the drive to work 18 hours a day, to the detriment of his health.
>
> —"Somali Republic"[16]

The new regime was confident that Osman did not want to return to active politics despite his concerns, but they worried about Hussen, whose record of democratic reform and public service was recognized as trailblazing. Hussen's first encounter with the new men was uneasy, but one could not have predicted the course events would take and his political trajectory from those initial days. One of the first people to come and visit him soon after the election was the commander of the national military. General Siyaad Barre came to the caretaker prime minister's office and invited the prime minister to join him for a short trip out of the city. Using the general's private car, they went to the agricultural town of Balad, less than thirty minutes' drive north of the capital. Their conversation centered on the change of national leadership, and in the end Barre made the following promise to Hussen: "Speaking in the name of the military, we would never forget what you have done for the defense forces, and we will stand by you in the future."[17] Barre's visit was followed by a visit from the president-elect, and then a series of complaints from the new men in Mogadishu followed. Sharmarkee saw the caretaker prime minister and asked him what he thought about the change. Hussen recalled,

> I told him that he knew what I thought, so I asked what the purpose of his question was. I told him he is going through the motions of meeting his constitutional obligation as he has already chosen the future PM. I joked with him and asked him to appoint me. He first laughed and then became furious. I notified him that he had already selected the PM so he did not need my advice. I also told him that I know what he was pregnant with but that he will see what fruits he gets. He said I was threatening him.[18]

Before Sharmarkee took office he complained to Osman that Hussen and his ministers were engaged in massive transfer of civil servants to different locations in the country to undermine the new government. Osman tried to calm the

president-elect, but to no avail, and then called the caretaker prime minister to ask him what the fuss was all about. Hussen's response was that the few changes they were making had been in process before the election and were routine and that his actions paralleled what Prime Minister Sharmarkee did in 1964. Osman was not happy with this answer and told Hussen that the circumstance was different then since he was president before and after the election.[19]

Sharmarkee and Hussen had a heated exchange again on June 26 when they met in the offices of the Speaker of parliament to talk about protocol and procedural matters pertaining to the transfer of power. The spark that started the exchange was the presence of Nicolino Mohamed who accompanied Sharmarkee and apparently drafted the material. Hussen objected to Nicolino's presence since the latter was one of the director generals he fired in the 1965 shake-up of the civil service. Nicolino and several of those fired then had coalesced around Sharmarkee and Egal during the campaign, and Nicolino became an aide to Sharmarkee.[20] Osman was astonished by Sharmarkee's indiscretion in the matter.[21]

Not all the encounters between Hussen and the new team were confrontational. In one instance Egal returned Hussen's generosity to him when he found out about Hussen's residence problem. Hussen did not own a private house that he could move to once he left the prime minister's office. In fact, he lived in the same modest government house that he had since he first became an MP, before the country became independent. In those days senior public employees lived in government houses whose rents were subsidized. MPs and ministers had the same privileges, and Hussen was one of them. What set Hussen apart from others was that he did not move to a more commodious abode during his premiership. Before his tenure as prime minister expired, Hussen wrote the responsible authorities that he intended to stay in the same house and would be paying the required rent. Egal found out about this and insisted that he should not be asked to pay rent and that his driver must stay with him to drive his private car.[22]

This kind intervention did not alter the political dynamic between the former prime minister and the new regime, which saw him as a formidable figure because of his determination to challenge them in their undemocratic behavior. It appears that the debate with Egal regarding opening SYL membership to other party members and the formation of a coalition government was merely the prelude to a new struggle. Sharmarkee, Egal, and Yassin Nur Hassan were worried that with Hussen remaining secretary-general of the SYL their political game plan would be unsafe, and consequently they endeavored to remove him from that post. Hussen was elected to this position when he was prime minister, but the party's constitution did not specify that the prime minister must be the secretary-general of the party. Therefore, he could not be automatically removed from the post until the next general meeting of the SYL congress when senior party officials would be elected. Given this legal obstacle, the new authority tried

to tarnish Hussen's record with a campaign of innuendo against him. Hussen thought that Egal was the front man in this game, but the real schemers were Sharmarkee and Yassin. Their first strategy was to deploy the same tactic they had used in the presidential campaign of buying votes of central committee members. They hoped that enough committee members would take the bait to allow them to call for a meeting of the committee to fire Hussen. Fortunately for Hussen, most members of the committee were not corrupted during the presidential campaign since most of them were not MPs.

Among the first to report the conspiracy to Hussen was a committee member named Abdi, who was supposedly known for his opportunism. The government team thought that he was easy prey, but they could not seduce him with promises. He told them that their best chance of getting rid of Hussen was to let matters take their course. But the new men were too impatient. They approached another member, Omar Stalin,[23] but he too rejected their plea and told them that he would not allow them to treat the former prime minister with disrespect. Their hunt for collaborators did not stop there, and they approached several others. Finally, they came to an old man by the name of Omar Borey and pleaded with him to help them dislodge Hussen so that they could turn the party's operations to suit their agenda. Egal and the team found they had struck a rock of integrity when the old man retorted, "If I do what you are asking me, then who will marry my daughter as I will be so disgraceful."[24]

When this strategy failed, the government team turned to another trick. They decided to accuse Hussen of misappropriating public money to the tune of 2 million shillings. They claimed that he was corrupt despite his anticorruption drive during his tenure as prime minister. Once the accusation was leaked, a number of MPs who originally betrayed the Osman-Hussen team in the presidential campaign, such as Haji Bashir Ismail, Sheikh Mukhtar (Speaker of parliament), Ibrahim Oonlaayeh, and the wealthy businessman Yusuf Egal, openly challenged the accusation. They told the instigators that such a scheme would immediately destabilize the government and the country and that no one would believe their assertions. These MPs organized a meeting between Egal, Yassin, and Hussen. They met in the chambers of parliament, and Hussen told Egal that this false accusation would backfire, since there were a lot of financial skeletons in Egal's closet.[25] Hussen knew from a senior source in the Somali Central Bank that substantial government cash had been transferred to Egal's personal account.[26] The meeting went nowhere, and Hussen asked the mediators to let the accuser take the matter to court, as that would also reveal who was behind the scheme. Since the Supreme Court was as yet uncorrupted, Hussen was confident that an investigation would not find any dirty laundry in his record. Egal stuck to his position, and the negotiation dragged on. In his last meeting with the mediators Hussen accused them of working for Sharmarkee and told them that they were

not doing him any favor through their mediation. Finally, the mediators told Hussen that the regime wanted control of the SYL and him to resign as secretary-general of the party, but Hussen responded that the government would have to win party control through the established legitimate means.

After a deadlock of two months Egal and associates were unable to push Hussen out of the SYL, and the latter was very satisfied with the defense the central committee gave him. He also recognized that the SYL under the new regime was doomed and thereafter unilaterally decided to resign from both the central committee and the party. This came as a shock to many old party stalwarts, as they considered Hussen to be a model member who embodied the party's core principles. But Hussen saw no democratic future in the establishment and for a short while became an independent MP. Being the sole credible opposition member, Hussen had other MPs who were not happy with the leadership often coming to be seen with him, so the regime would try to win them back with cash or promises. For several months he enjoyed a relatively relaxed life in parliament and then decided to take up an invitation from the Sudanese government to visit there while en route to the Haji (Mecca) with his wife. Hussen was one of the few leaders who did not go on pilgrimage at the expense of the government. The Sudanese treated him royally, although they knew that he was out of office. Moreover, the Somali ambassador in Sudan, Abdirahman Ahmed Ali (Tuur) hosted him kindly as if he were still his boss. Hussen warned him that he must keep a low profile since the folk in Mogadishu were vengeful. After Mecca, he traveled to Lebanon, where the government of the country provided for his stay and a Somali university student studying agriculture kept him company for the entire period. He then traveled to Cairo and Rome, where he met Osman. The two of them decided to tour Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.[27]

Hussen returned to Mogadishu after five months and immediately started thinking about the challenges facing the country in the forthcoming parliamentary election. In mid-1968 he decided to form a new political party, the Democratic Action Party (DAP) and found office space, which came to be known as Dabka, in the heart of Mogadishu.[28] The party's acronym DAP was similar to the Somali word for fire. Several of Hussen's former ministers, such as Abdulkadir Zoppo, Dukhsi, and the country's former ambassador to the United States, Qaybe, were key members.[29] The DAP was financially supported by numerous small, 1,000-shilling, contributions from businesses. At the opening ceremony, several notables such as poets read their creations, but Hussen was the keynote speaker. He told the thousands of people who came to see the event,

> It is amazing that after being an SYL member for so much of my adult life that I am here today to inaugurate a new party, DAP. It is the last thing I wanted to do but circumstances have left me with no choice. This party is committed to

> preserving freedom and democracy while the men who now control SYL are bent to replace the democratic rules of our country with their own rules. Our party's program is identical to that of the old SYL. DAP's agenda is to preserve the democratic constitution of the country and respect the rights of our citizens enshrined in our laws. The new men in power have a list of people who they want to get rid of and our new party will welcome all those who dare to stand for justice and fair play.[30]

The DAP had a weekly public event, and within a very short period it became the most vibrant political affair in the capital. It has been reported that the regime was so terrified about this development that some of the most senior leaders used to come in their private cars and in disguise to listen to Hussen's critique of their government.[31] Efforts were made by the regime to curtail these events, and there was discussion in senior circles that Hussen's speeches were insidious and a danger to peace.[32] Recognizing that they could not arrest Hussen or close down the party's premises, the regime concentrated on using its executive power and majority in parliament to rewrite the electoral law to suffocate any political opposition in the forthcoming parliamentary election. Rewriting electoral law took center stage in parliament:

> Winding up four days of often critical but relatively calm debate in a late evening session May 21, the National Assembly endorsed the 1969 electoral law in a secret vote with 93 in favor and 8 opposed. The GSR [Government of the Somali Republic] agreed to accept some amendments proposed in the Assembly but there were no major changes to the draft electoral bill. The controversial provision which required civil servants to resign six months prior to the election if they wished to be a candidate has been somewhat modified, but the exact nature and significance of this change cannot be assessed. The main opposition to the bill centered in the minor parties[,] who are convinced that they stand to lose seats because of the new method of determining the winners in an electoral district with more than one seat.[33]

There were a number of troubling changes, but two propositions were particularly disturbing. First, the so-called quotient—a new formula for distributing seats—would penalize small parties. Second, the change in the rule governing civil servants who desired to run for office was drastic. Under the new rule civil servants running for parliament were forced to resign from their position rather than take the usual leave of absence as was the case in the past. Under this rule the regime intended to frighten talented civil servants unhappy with the destruction of the merit-based system into thinking twice before challenging prevailing political order. Hussen proposed several amendments to the bill, knowing that his suggestions had no chance of passing, but parliament adopted the new law.

The only challenge to the new law came from the national police and its commander, General Mohamed Abshir.[34] Abshir consulted with his American and Italian legal advisors about the constitutionality of the new law, and these experts concluded that the legislation was in contravention of the constitution.[35] Abshir brought all his regional senior officers to a conference in Mogadishu and asked them to examine the new legislation and present their advice.[36] After an intense examination of the law, the officers unanimously agreed that the law was not in agreement with the constitution. General Abshir concluded that the police force, as a national institution, must not side with any regime or political party. Enforcing this unconstitutional law would be tantamount to the police favoring the regime in a political contest. Abshir told the officers to take the report of the experts to their regions and not to enforce governors' instructions pertaining to this law.[37]

Once the national police's decision became public, the regime went mad. The police came under the purview of the Ministry of Interior, and the minister, Yassin Nur Hassan, wrote to Abshir and accused the general of creating his own government. Abshir responded to the accusation in a letter to the minister, to which he attached the legal opinion of the experts. He asserted that he could not enforce the new electoral law given its constitutional status. He added that he would rather resign than enforce an unconstitutional law.[38] The minister decided to interpret Abshir's statement as a letter of resignation and wrote a public letter in which he said that he regretfully accepted Abshir's resignation.[39] The regime moved quickly and appointed Colonel Jama Qorshel as commander of the police. Gorshel reversed Abshir's edict, moved forward to faithfully support the government, and began to focus on the activities of DAP. On the orders of the minister of Interior the police closed the DAP offices twice, April through July and then in August.[40]

A glimpse of the police's priorities under Qorshel came to light after Egal attended an Organization of African Unity summit in Kinshasa where Egal announced his government's policy for the missing Somali territories. He made clear during the summit that he wanted new understandings with France about the Somali Coast and with Kenya and Ethiopia. He asked President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia to mediate the dispute between Kenya and Somalia. In addition, Egal and his team visited Addis Ababa and issued a joint communiqué with Ethiopia.[41] The public read Egal's declarations as a thinly veiled way of agreeing to the Ethiopian and Kenyan positions on the Somali territories. They mobilized a demonstration to coincide with Egal's return to Mogadishu. A very large crowd came to show their displeasure, but Egal dismissed them as troublemakers. In the meantime, the American embassy in Mogadishu, which was delighted with Egal's foreign policy initiatives, made an urgent appeal to Washington with the request that Vice President Hubert Humphrey's forthcoming visit to Ethiopia

and Kenya be extended by a few hours so he could visit Mogadishu and provide moral support for the Egal team. "The visit to Mogadishu was particularly well timed in that it gave a psychological boost to Egal's policy of détente with Ethiopia and Kenya."[42] Washington acceded to the request, and authorities in Mogadishu began making preparations for the visit. When government critics found out about the visit they organized another demonstration. Among the leaders of the demonstration was Bardda Cad, who was an MP, and several dozen lesser-known personalities. The government did not take any chances and immediately took the MP to prison without considering that MPs had constitutionally guaranteed immunity from prosecution unless parliament lifted that privilege. Another five dozen individuals were also jailed. Thus Bardda Cad became the first political prisoner in postcolonial Somalia. He was released after Humphrey left.[43] The vice president stayed in Afgoi in the guest house Osman built, and former president Osman and former prime minister Hussen were invited to dinner there. Later on, Hussen used Bardda Cad's internment as evidence of how far the regime was willing to go to transgress the constitution.

Soon after this event, Sharmarkee, Egal, and Yassin, the "Three Cappuccinos" as they were known,[44] began to reshuffle civil servants and position their supporters in strategic posts, including governors and district commissioners:

> The Egal group also has control over the government apparatus in its hands, and the recent wholesale switching of regional governors and district commissioners provides a fairly clear indication that this influence will be used in the election. To the extent that this is done by unethical or illegal means, there is likely to be serious trouble. In 1964, as the election campaigns began in earnest, the then president Aden Abdullah Osman publically and privately worked to good effect, to ensure honest elections. One can only hope that a similar pattern will emerge in 1969.[45]

The governors and district commissioners had a vital role to play in the election because they controlled government machinery in their localities. For instance, district commissioners, as agents of the Ministry of Interior, received pre-election registration forms from party candidates and verified the authenticity of party voter lists and signatures. These authorities created obstacles for parties and independent candidates not aligned with the regime. In setting up this system, Egal dealt with political matters in the North, and Sharmarkee and Yassin managed Southern affairs.[46] For example, Egal asked Yassin to transfer Hassan Woqooyi to Burao as governor to fend off challengers there during the forthcoming election, while Egal appointed Abdirahman Sheikh Ali, who was in the court of appeals in Burao, as the new president of the Supreme Court.

> Without any advance intimation, the Presidency of the Supreme Court was taken over in May 29 by a Somali, Abdirahman Sheikh Ali, replacing an

> Italian expatriate . . . who has held the post since March 1965. . . . While a satisfying gesture, the appointment as chief Justice of a relatively young man with only seven years experience, all of them in Somalia, is not likely to lead to any early improvement in the . . . administration of the justice system in Somalia.[47]

Replacing the Italian president of the court and his seasoned Somali deputy was meant to reform the court to a regime-friendly institution.

As the scramble for parliament ensued, the government's strategy was to nullify the application of as many candidates of the opposition as possible, particularly those who had voted for Osman in the presidential election.[48] Hussen and his party did not have the resources to field candidates across the country and decided to concentrate on a very few places such as Mogadishu, Garowe, Galkayo, Bula Burde, Belet Weyne, Baidoa, Dhusa Mareb, and Bur Hakaba, while a few other associates ran as independents in places like Burao. Meanwhile, the government's strategy to disqualify as many of the candidates as possible at the registration stage went into high gear. Paradoxically, when Osman was president opposition parties who had complaints at this stage of the electoral process always went to him, knowing that he would listen to them. Now, given that Sharmarkee was deeply involved in partisan politics, DAP and other parties did not have any office to turn to for advice. The case of Abdulkadir Zoppo, Hussen's Interior minister, was one of the clearest cases of political manipulation of the system. Zoppo presented more than the required number of voter names and signatures to the district commission in Bur Hakaba, but his list was tossed out by none other than Ibrahim Police, who was reprimanded by Hussen for rigging the constitutional plebiscite in the town of Wanla Weyn in 1961. He appealed his case to the Supreme Court only to face the court's new president. The court ruled against him, and consequently the president of the court was popularly dubbed "buur Liqe" (the devourer of the mountain).[49]

> In a decision which may well be an unfortunate bench mark in Somali judicial history, the Supreme Court on February 23 rejected the appeals filed by the DAP, SNC, HDMS [Hizbia Dastur Mustagbal Simali (formerly Hizbia Digil Mirifle Somali)], and SDU [Somali Democratic Union] when these parties were unable to register their lists of candidates for the March election in Bur Hakaba. The Court made only one announcement, saying that the Bur Acaba appeals, as well as the appeals of SNC in Zeila, and appeals concerning intra-SYL disputes in Adale, and Garoe were denied on "technical grounds." . . . The rejection of the Bur Hakaba lists, and in particular the DAP list of . . . Zoppo . . . is the most significant and from all indications, a blatant injustice which the GSR may live to regret. It is likely that President [Abdirashid Ali] Shermarke himself is the principal villain in this piece in that he apparently gave instructions to one and all concerned that the DAP list was to be blocked.[50]

In the meantime Hussen was busy trying to file the party's lists in Garowe, Galkayo, and Mogadishu. He went to Garowe, his old district, where local opinion makers supported him. He knew that the government had posted a new district commissioner and police commissioner in town to challenge DAP's list. However, Hussen had a number of officers who kept him informed about what schemes the government had. Among them were a Hammari (an old resident of Hamar, or Mogadishu) regional judge based in Bossasso, a policeman who worked in the finance department, and another policeman. These individuals watched the process carefully without any favor to anyone, and when they saw illegal behavior on the part of the authorities they alerted Hussen. Despite the intimidation, Hussen took his party's list to the district office, accompanied by a large crowd. The district commissioner could not find any problem with the application and had to submit it to Mogadishu. It pleased Hussen that the last newscast of the day from Radio Mogadishu announced that the DAP had successfully filed election papers. He then immediately went to Galkayo to do the same and then to Mogadishu. Galkayo used to have four parliamentary seats, but the government decided to move two of those seats to Jariiban, where the minister of Interior who authorized the transfer of the two seats also ran unopposed. The new governor of the region, Bille Musa, had grown up in a church mission and was first appointed to a governorship by Hussen. Bille Musa was a relative of the Somali president, and the regime had confidence in him when they transferred him to this region. Unfortunately for the regime, Bille had a lot of respect for Hussen and sent a message to him that he was under tremendous political pressure to rig the system but that he would not be happy to see Hussen wronged. The two men never met during this time, but Hussen sent a message to him requesting that he only uphold the law. The DAP submitted its papers to the district office, and it took two days for Radio Mogadishu to report the event.[51] Finally, Hussen returned to Mogadishu, and the party successfully filed its registration forms for parliament and local government.

The 1969 election was the toughest in the country's history, and the machinery of the state was fully deployed to return the ruling regime to power. In contrast, Hussen and his party ran a shoestring operation, and he shuttled between Garowe, Galkayo, and Mogadishu to campaign for those seats. Except for occasional attempts by thugs to harass or intimidate Hussen, the regime turned its attention to the selection of the civil servants who staffed the polling stations. Most of the sixty-four political parties were allowed to have their observers in the polling stations, although the civil servants managed the stations. The day of reckoning came on March 26, 1969, and it was reported that violence marred a number of areas, although the majority of polling stations did not see any violence. It has been estimated that nearly forty people lost their lives during the campaign.[52] Once polling stations were closed the ballots had to be counted in the presence

of all observers. In Garowe, the DAP representative was taken away by the police and jailed, and ballots were counted without any representative from the DAP. The regional judge confirmed that the DAP won, but the central election office in Mogadishu gave the two parliamentary seats to the SYL. In Galkayo, Election Day ended peacefully, but the regime was eager to steal the two seats. Earlier in the day, they sent a special police plane carrying Yassin's aide to oversee the count. At the end of the day all boxes containing ballots were brought to the district headquarters, and the administrator claimed that it was too late in the day to count the votes and ordered that the ballot boxes be locked in storage until the morning. Once the public became aware of this decision a large contingent of Hussen's followers came to the center and told the authorities that they would keep watch during the night. When the counting was done the following day the DAP came in first and the SYL second. In Mogadishu, Ismail Jimale who ran as an independent and was tacitly supported by the SYL won the seat, but the DAP took a slim majority in the municipality.

Immediately after election results were released, a storm of petitioners claiming fraud flooded the Supreme Court, asking it to reexamine seats claimed by the SYL. Similarly, the DAP launched appeals to the court for the seats in Garowe. Unfortunately for the petitioners, the government anticipated this and had packed the Supreme Court with its supporters. The president of the court, Abdirahman Sheikh Ali, dismissed all the petitions, leaving the opposition without any options.

> On June 30, the eve of Independence Day celebration, the Supreme Court quietly let it be known that it was collectively rejecting all of the thirty odd appeals filed with the Court after the Central Electoral Board certified the results of the parliamentary election on April 9.[53]

One of the more conspicuous targets of the regime was the respected former minister from Las Anood, Ali Garad Jama, who supported Sharmarkee in the presidential election. Apparently, he did not get along with Egal and was consequently eliminated. Table 7.1 shows the final tally of the votes by major party.

Even before the dust settled and the new parliament was seated, nearly all the independent and non-SYL winners immediately switched allegiance and joined the ruling party. In addition, the most critical opposition party, the DAP, lost two of its new MPs who had the faint hope of gaining personal rewards from the regime. Sharmarkee reappointed Egal to form a government, and the mad rush to Egal's residence ensued. The new government became even larger than the previous one, and cash rewards were sought by MPs to pay their election expenses. It appeared that Egal and his team could not bear to imagine the possibility of a significant opposition in parliament and dispatched Sheikh Ali Jimale to persuade all SNC MPs to switch sides, hoping to convince Hussen to support

Table 7.1 Distribution of parliamentary seats by party

Party	Number of parliamentary seats
SYL	73
SNC	11
HDMS	8
SANU	3
DAP	3
PLGS	3
SDU	2
PSS	2
PMPS	2
Others	16
Total	123

Source: "Elections in Somalia," *African Elections Database*, October 10, 2012, http://africanelections.tripod.com/so.html.

Note: SYL, Somali Youth League; SNC, Somali National Congress; HDMS, Hizbia Dastur Mustaqbal Somali; SANU, Somali African National Union; DAP, Democratic Action Party; PLGS, Partito Liberale dei Giovani Somali; SDU, Somali Democratic Union; PSS, Somali Socialist Party; PMPS, Somali People's Movement Party.

the government in the vote of confidence so the vote would be unanimous and by acclamation. But Hussen had strong reservations about the government's program and the ballooning of cabinet portfolios to thirty posts.[54] When it came to the confidence vote the government received overwhelming support, and Hussen became the lone opposition.[55] Egal's success had a vulnerable underbelly as American diplomats recognized:

> To stay in power he has compromised himself by sanctioning rigged elections and imposing political controls on the Supreme Court, Police, and press. While these measures may have tightened the Prime Minister's control over inert bureaucracy, they also have made enemies.[56]

Hussen's strategy after this was to focus on keeping the public's attention on how the regime was trying to turn the country into a single-party dictatorship.[57] Since the Supreme Court was already in the regime's pocket and the police under its control, the regime focused its attention to reforming parliament. Since Sharmarkee, Egal, and Yassin knew that they could not buy all MPs all the time and that enough disgruntled MPs could derail their plans, they endeavored to change the constitution in order to turn parliament into a pliant institution. The

government began a peculiar engagement in which it asked parliamentarians to consider changing article 58 of the constitution, which provided immunity from prosecution for members of parliament. Items 4 and 5 of the article declare,

> Without the authorization of the Assembly, a deputy may not be subjected to penal proceedings, he may not be arrested or otherwise deprived of personal liberty nor subjected to any search of domicile, except when caught committing a crime for which a warrant or order of arrest is mandatory, he may not be placed under arrest nor held in detention even in execution of an irrevocable sentence. In cases other than those involving penal persecutions, an action may be taken, against a deputy in accordance with the ordinary law without the authorization of the Assembly.[58]

The leadership wanted to limit these rights to the premises of the parliament only. It sought to bribe enough MPs to agree to this proposition to gather the necessary two-thirds votes to effect the change to the constitution. Hussen focused his criticism on this agenda and used his party and parliament platform to alert MPs and the population about what was at stake. He informed those in parliament who would listen to him that the regime's strategy was for MPs to commit political suicide, as they would not be safe from government intimidation outside the parliament building. Hussen underscored the gradual erosion of civil service autonomy and cited a number of civil servants who had been dumped by the regime without the due process afforded by the Civil Service Commission. Despite the huge majority the government had in parliament it appears that it was worried about Hussen's voice and consequently monitored his house and his movements, as one senior policeman reported to the former prime minister.[59] The attention the regime gave to Hussen, such as some regime leaders eavesdropping on the DAP's weekly event, further enhanced his credibility and attracted even larger crowds to DAP rallies.

By midautumn, the regime appeared very confident that it had consolidated its power and was not worried about the military. Soon after the election, Egal toured military facilities in and around Mogadishu, and rumors began to fly that the three senior leaders of government were planning to change some of the most senior military leaders. It is in this context that regime leaders discussed sending General Barre to the Soviet Union for training in order to get rid of him. Fearing what the regime was planning for him, the general preemptively visited the prime minister's office in central Mogadishu one evening and asked to meet with the prime minister. After the general had waited for over an hour, the cabinet secretary felt that it was inappropriate to keep the general waiting any longer and so went to the prime minister to urge him to see the commander or set up another appointment for him.[60] Egal was dismissive and told the secretary not to bother. In retrospect, Barre put up with this indignity only to conceal his contempt for

the new leadership, and Barre's Soviet allies were becoming uneasy about the regime's growing pro-Western drift.[61]

Meanwhile there was a lot of political tension in several parts of the country, and President Sharmarkee embarked on a journey to visit several areas. In the town of Las Anood one of the president's police bodyguards fatally shot the president in cold blood. The policeman was taken to Mogadishu General Prison.[62] Prime Minister Egal was on a visit to the United States and rushed home to take charge of the affairs of the state, although the Speaker of parliament immediately became the acting president. Egal was agitated, and once he arrived in Mogadishu he spoke on national radio and warned the wives of political actors involved in assassination to prepare themselves to wear "assayda."[63] Once the president was laid to rest, Egal and Yassin took the reins of government and started planning for the election of a new president. They immediately made the decision that someone from Sharmarkee's extended family ought to replace him, and discussions began with Haji Musa Boqor as the best replacement. It is reported that Haji Musa did not want the post, given his limited education. Egal and Yassin were eager to have Haji Musa, and asked several prominent people from his community, such as General Barre and Colonel Qorshel, to speak with Musa.[64] In parliament a number of younger and more educated MPs led by the lawyer Ismail Jimale opposed the proposition. Despite having much respect for Haji Musa, they felt that others were more qualified than he. Egal and Yassin insisted on the candidate, and realizing they did not have the votes needed to win, they went back to their standard campaign tool kit of buying votes.

After Democracy

When Maandeeq went into labor
twins the day she delivered
When our flag replaced the colonialists'
when we again gave thanks to Allah
And assembled the two parliaments into one
When they were elected into presidents and ministers and
With healthy mind all faced the same direction
The pernicious politicians caused confusion and
Kept all privileges to themselves
If only they had led us competently, we would not have come out empty-handed
The merciless ones did not even knit a garment for the land
Never to lose an election, they who made it their sole conviction
In our rural areas they handed a dagger to everyone
They repeatedly made false wail of no succor and without kin support
The catastrophe they created divided one household from another
The poison they have injected in us destroyed reciprocity among the youth

> Their aim was always the car and the house
> From the beginning they told us lies, lies, and lies only
>
> —Abdillahi Sultan Timaade, "Maandeeq"[65]

> Egal must now tackle an imposing backlog of political and economic matters swept aside during the campaign and its aftermath. There is not, according to the local [International Monetary Fund] representative, "a single financial law in the Somali Republic that has not been flagrantly disregarded in the last six months."
>
> —US Department of State, *Research Memorandum RAF-10*, July 8, 1969

As the appointed day for parliament to elect the president of the republic neared, Egal and Yassin divided between themselves the 1.5 million shillings they had collected from the Somali Central Bank and went to their homes, where they invited individual MPs to come and collect their loot. Egal took 1 million and Yassin took 500,000 shillings. The MPs came in droves, and Hussen and a companion watched the affair from inside a private car parked across the road from Egal's Lido beach house. After seeing enough of this business Hussen and his friend went their separate ways to get some sleep. At 5:00 a.m. Hussen was awakened by his nephew, a telephone operator, who lived with him and who went to work at that hour. When the young man had left the house, military men in the neighborhood told him to go back to his home. The young man told Hussen what he saw, and the latter recollected an encounter he had had the day before when he was approached by a policeman as he walked to his home from the Juba Hotel. The policeman told him that there would be a coup and that he must not tell this news to anyone.[66] Hussen called Osman and told him what he had heard. Osman asked him if he wanted to see a military coup. The former leaders agreed that neither had any desire for a coup despite their disdain for the regime. Hussen decided to stay at his home for the morning and waited for the morning broadcast of Radio Mogadishu. Rather than beginning the program with the standard world news, Radio Mogadishu played unusual music for most of the morning. At 8:00 a.m. Abdillahi Bile, a former staff member of the Ministry of Public Works during Hussen's tenure who was robbed of his parliamentary seat in Dusamareeb during the recent election, visited him and told him the military had staged a coup. In Bile's car they drove through the streets of the city and saw huge crowds celebrating the coup, and then they went to Afgoi. After returning home in the afternoon, soldiers came to Hussen's home and informed him that they had orders to take him. The same vehicle also collected Osman and Haji Musa and drove them to the presidential retreat in Afgoi, built by Osman during his presidential tenure. There they found senior ministers of the deposed regime such as Yassin. Prime Minister Egal was under house arrest and would join them later. During that first day of captivity, one of the guards told the group that there was a new government and that they

were nothing. Osman stood up to this man and told him that they might not be government leaders but that they were citizens, and the officer immediately corrected himself.

It was not until several days later that the public came to know that Siyaad Barre was the coup leader.[67] One of the prisoners, Aden Shire Lo, whose wife was the sister of Barre's wife, came to Osman and Hussen after learning about the new leader and said, "This is the beginning of the end for Somalia."[68] Shortly thereafter the coup makers claimed that Qorshel and Gabeyreh were engaged in a countercoup and hurriedly courtmartialed them. They were put to death, initiating a violent political order.[69] During their internment Osman received letters from his eldest son, Abdulkadir, who was appointed minister of Public Works, but then failed to hear from him for several weeks. He approached the guard and asked what was happening with his son. After failing to get any information, Osman decided to go on a hunger strike, and Hussen joined him. Two days later the guards reported Osman and Hussen's hunger strike to their superiors. The senior officer called Osman and Hussen into a private meeting, and told them that Salaad Gabeyreh, who was Osman's son-in-law, had attempted a coup and that Abdulkadir was taken in with him. The two former leaders then broke their hunger strike.

Patience began to wear thin among the prisoners after nearly three and a half years in detention. A daring decision was made by one of them, Abu Sitah, who had been a junior minister in Egal's government, that ultimately led to the freedom of most prisoners.[70] Without telling his fellow prisoners, Abu Sitah informed the prison officers that he wanted to know why he was in prison and that if the authorities did not provide an answer within three days he would walk out of prison even if they had to shoot to stop him. He told Hussen about his decision, and Hussen decided to join him. Hussen informed Osman, and Osman instantly joined them as well. The officers panicked and immediately reported the development to the military council. Two days later and late at night the prisoners were brought into the courtyard of the detention center and were told that it was time for them to face justice in the National Security Court. Mohamoud Geele, the chief of the National Security Court, presided over this makeshift court, and the public prosecutor was Osman Munye. Individual prisoners' names were called, although everyone was lined up in the same area. Osman Munye read the case against each prisoner, and for most of them he declared that they were not guilty. The entire session of the court lasted no more than two hours. Before the session came to an end, Munye told the court that the government had strong cases against six of the prisoners: Egal, Aden Isaak, Abdillahi Jireh, Yassin, Ali Alio, and Omer Maalin (three Northerners and three Southerners). The judge and his assistants privately consulted on the cases and came back to the court. The judge called the name of each detainee, except the last six, and told him he was free to

go. The house arrest of General Mohamed Abshir, the former police commander, was also rescinded.

Buses were made available at a remarkable speed, and the freed men were quickly taken to their homes before dawn. When it was Hussen's turn to be dropped at home his wife refused to respond to the knock on the gate because she was scared. Hussen got out of the bus and yelled to his wife that it was him. In disbelief, she opened the door to see a man with a huge beard and very long hair, resembling an Islamic imam. Well-wishers came to visit him in large numbers, and the regime felt uneasy about his popularity. Mohamed Jama Badmah, a former colleague and friend of Hussen, was sent by the authorities to warn him to adopt a low profile, but Hussen told him that he had no intention of being intimidated into turning away well-wishers.[71] A day later Zoppo showed up, accompanied by a photographer and a barber. Zoppo told his old friend that he wanted to take a picture of him and then have him get a haircut and shave his beard. Hussen told him that he knew this was not Zoppo's idea but a message from Barre to stay below the political radar. After much debate between the two, the photo was taken and the hair cut.

Two days later the former prisoners were called to the military headquarters to meet with the military junta. General Barre spoke alone and named the



Hussen a day after being released from prison, 1973. Courtesy of Abdirazak H. Hussen.

number of things accomplished by his regime. But the real message they were called to hear was that this government was unlike any other they had known and that he was warning them to stay out of public affairs, otherwise the regime would act swiftly against them if they reentered politics. The final message was, "We do not wait to be shot first, but when we feel threatened we preemptively go for the kill."[72]

Osman, Haji Musa, and Hussen spoke for the group. Osman noted that he was happy if the regime accomplished all they claimed, but their incarceration was illegal and unjustified and that if they were guilty of any crimes they should be judged in court. He told Barre that the remark about not waiting to be shot was a naked threat and that the regime was looking for excuses to deprive them of their rights. He said if that was the case, they might as well return them to detention immediately. Osman and Haji Musa agreed with him, but Barre did not respond to them. They were then told to leave. As they boarded the bus one of Barre's guards called Hussen back to see the general. The others left, and Hussen felt the recall was deliberately designed to drive a wedge between him and others. Barre stated that he did not trust these thieves (other politicians) and asked how they were treated while in prison. Hussen expected to hear him apologize for imprisoning them, but he recognized that this statement was a ploy. He asked the general if this was all he had called him back for. Hussen added that if the general expected him to break ranks with his colleagues, he had picked the wrong person. The former prisoner emphatically told the general that he had never been a spy in his life and did not intend to be one now. Barre asked him why he refused to have his hair cut, and this statement demonstrated to Hussen that Somalia's military leaders had followed the details of their life in prison. In the end Barre told Hussen that he had not realized how honest a prime minister Hussen was; the military investigation had discovered only $500 in his bank account.

Hussen had several other encounters with Barre. The first was a few days after his release. At 2:00 a.m. he was taken to Barre's office, and when he got there he realized Osman and Haji Musa had just left. The three men were summoned at this strange hour to inform them that the regime was very concerned about the activities of Mohamed Abshir. Barre told Hussen that Abshir was a CIA agent and delivered his reports to the Americans through his younger sister, who had been educated in the United States. Hussen could not hold back what he felt and told the general that Abshir was unjustly prosecuted by the previous government and that he did not deserve the three-and-a-half-year detention this government imposed on him. He added that Abshir was the one who told Osman, Sharmarkee (as prime minister), and him that Barre had a large family to support and that his salary was not enough to sustain them. As a result of this plea, all made contributions to a fund, which was given to him. He pressed Barre to not bite

the hand that fed him and said he should be mindful of the weight of his office and not abuse his power. He pleaded with the general to talk to Abshir, but Barre informed him that Abshir should seek audience with him. At this point Hussen realized that Barre was gunning for revenge against Abshir for his supposed haughtiness, and within a short time Hussen's suspicion was confirmed. Abshir was detained again and sent to the infamous prison named Labaatan Jiro, where he remained for over a decade. In an ironic twist of events, Abshir was incarcerated with Egal, whose government had prosecuted him.

Hussen was very troubled by the ruthlessness and meanness of Barre, and he decided to take up farming in Lower Juba to get away from political trouble. In the meantime, many people knew he had little means to sustain a respectable life and several friends and others collected gifts for him. Among them was a former senior government employee dismissed during the reforms of the second republic but who had since made a small fortune. Others bought him a car, and an Italian garage owner fixed it at no charge and told him that he respected what he had done when he was prime minister. In late 1973 he negotiated with three others who had jointly owned a plantation since 1957 and bought them out. He paid them what he could and promised to pay the rest as the plantation developed. The plantation had no residence, so Hussen stayed with another plantation owner while another person managed the daily operations of the plantation. Hussen was struck by the deplorable conditions of the workers and their awful living conditions on the plantation. He realized that many of them suffered from chronic malaria and other waterborne diseases since the drinking water came directly from the river. He arranged for a deep water well to be drilled to supply clean drinking water, and urged the workers to keep the lid on the well to safeguard water quality. In addition, he ordered that windows in all residential huts be fitted with screens to keep out mosquitoes and provide cross-ventilation. Finally, he bought a significant quantity of antimalaria medicine and provided it to the workers free of charge.[73]

While Hussen was trying to establish his farm the regime was not sure about his motives and kept an eye on him in this remote part of the country. One day he received a surprising call from the governor of Lower Juba, who invited him for lunch. After lunch the governor told his bodyguards and assistants to stay away as he wanted to take a walk with Hussen. The governor was a Northerner who appeared to be trusted by the regime but who turned out to be independent minded. During their stroll the governor told Hussen that the lunch invitation was initiated by the authorities in Mogadishu, who instructed him to find out what he was up to. He told Hussen that the two motorcyclists who lurked around his farm were government spies who monitored his movements. The governor was also expected to report back after the encounter, but he assured Hussen that he would submit an innocuous report.

A month later, Barre asked Hussen to come and see him in Mogadishu, and the former prime minister was taken to Avizione Military Headquarters without knowing what was in store for him. After the usual formalities pertaining to his health and how the farm was doing, Barre started criticizing Hussen's new venture. Hussen asked him if that was the reason he brought him to Mogadishu and what exactly he wanted from him. He added that he left Mogadishu and politics behind for Barre to deal with and wondered why the general could not leave him alone. Barre reiterated that he wanted him to work with the government, as was suggested in an earlier meeting, but Hussen told him to respect his decision to become a farmer and an ordinary citizen. Finally, Barre told the former prime minister that he would like him to be Somalia's ambassador to the United Nations and insisted that he accept the offer. Seeing that Barre was set on this idea and knowing the ruthlessness of the regime, Hussen realized that Barre was uncomfortable with him being in the country, and so he told the general that he would think about the offer. Hussen decided to consult with his friends and close colleagues. He organized a group lunch with them in a bush restaurant outside Mogadishu, and after a long discussion all agreed that they were concerned for his safety and that he must accept the offer and leave the country. He separately met with Osman for consultation, who told him that there was no security in the country to protect citizen's rights. He added that he personally worried about the safety of his eldest son, Abdulkadir, who was harassed by the regime. Given these circumstances Osman urged Hussen to take the offer and leave the country for the time being.[74]

Hussen met with Barre and told him that he would accept the offer on two conditions: that he would be given a sufficient number of educated people who had the skills and the resources necessary to do the job well and that Hussen could name the individuals he needed and that the general would inform his people at the Foreign Affairs Ministry to expedite the request. Omer Arteh was the minister of Foreign Affairs during this period, but the director general, Abdirahman Jama Barre, Siyaad Barre's half brother, wielded the power of the ministry. Hussen got the two key people he wanted and left for New York, where he found the Somali office at the UN an utter mess in every way imaginable. People on the payroll did not have the skills to do the work. These people were employed primarily to serve the pleasure of the director general. Hussen's first task was to clean up the financial mess and then reorganize the affairs of the mission. Once this urgent matter was done, he focused on streamlining the work process to ensure that the mission served the national interests rather than those of the regime.

Hussen's major accomplishment during his tenure in New York was to put Djibouti back on the UN Decolonization Committee's agenda to push for its independence.[75] France lobbied the committee to convince it that Djibouti was part of France and that all the population needed was a degree of local



Hussen, Somalia's UN ambassador, meets with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, 1975. Courtesy of Abdirazak H. Hussen.

autonomy. At this point Hassan Gulaid, who led the movement for independence, came to New York under the auspices of Hussen and counterlobbied the French agenda. Meanwhile, Ethiopia supported the French position and accused the Somali government of expansionism. After an intense campaign by all sides the Decolonization Committee supported the liberation agenda and called for a referendum in the territory to enable the local people to decide their future. The referendum was held in due course and Djibouti became an independent country on June 27, 1977.

Despite his success in finishing a job he had started when he was prime minister, Hussen was deeply dismayed by the incredible mismanagement of the country's affairs, including the war with Ethiopia in 1977 and the increasing brutality visited on the political opposition. The regime was also very unhappy with Hussen's unwillingness to play its game of deepening the tribalization of the national project and consequently sent delegates to visit New York to report back on his antiregime deeds. Finally, Hussen wrote a very long and detailed letter to



Ambassador Hussen with US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at the UN. Courtesy of Abdirazak H. Hussen.

Barre telling him that he was resigning from the post because he could no longer tolerate the tyranny of the regime. Then he asked for political asylum in the United States.

Conclusion

> In those underdeveloped countries which accede to independence, there almost always exist a small number of honest intellectuals . . . who instinctively distrust the race for positions and pensions which is symptomatic of the early days of independence. . . . The personal situation of these men . . . explains their manifest contempt for profiteers and schemers. Closing the road to [these] is, certainly, the means whereby the vicissitudes of newfound independence may be avoided, and with them the decline of morals, the installing of corruption within the country, economic regression, and the immediate disaster of anti-democratic regime depending on force and intimidation. But it is also the means towards progress.
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> —Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*[76]

Within three short years Somalia moved from being an African democratic pacesetter to being just another military dictatorship. On the basis of the evidence presented in the chapter, I proffer that the key factors that explain the rise of the authoritarian (civilian or military) order was the quality and the commitment of political leadership. Somalia's vibrant democracy during the first and second republics was anchored by key national leaders, President Osman and Prime Minister Hussen, and their supporters, who carefully guarded the integrity of the constitution and who considered the democratic management of political affairs a way of life. Their respect for the laws of the land and their ability to enforce them fairly ensured that their subordinates minimally and formally obeyed public order. As President Osman aptly observed, "Without democracy"[77] dreadful things would befall the nation. Equally, the general public, despite its political ignorance of how institutions work, cherished the freedom to challenge and criticize their leaders in an atmosphere that was free from intimidation and violence. Osman's and Hussen's fears became a political reality at the end of the decade.

It was apparent during the presidential election that the three opposition leaders were driven by not a conviction to advance democratic development of the country but their lust for power. The methods they deployed during and after the presidential election, the efforts they invested in packing public institutions such as the Supreme Court with supporters, and the exploitation of the administrative organs of the state to deny the political opposition their citizenship rights to run for parliament demonstrated their discomfort with democracy. Osman, the classic moderate, was troubled by some of the early signs of the new regime, but he remained hopeful that wisdom and good sense would prevail. The Three Cappuccinos clearly understood that Osman was retired from active politics despite remaining a permanent member of parliament, but they knew that Hussen was not going to disappear into political oblivion and consequently decided to clip his wings by any means possible. The regime's drive against Hussen was not isolated but reflected its political strategy of eliminating all opposition. The good old nationalist party became an instrument of the leaders rather than a democratic institution that kept a check on their authority. Such relentless pursuit of total power prepared the way for Somalia becoming a single-party state after the 1969 parliamentary election. Electoral fraud was widespread, and the grievances that this engendered led to the murder of President Sharmarkee.

The Soviets supported the Somali military, whose leaders were dismayed by political developments in the country but who also saw the regime as a menace to its own affairs and realized the murder of the president was a god-sent opportunity to act. Tired of the regime's corruption, the unsuspecting public enthusiastically welcomed the coup. Rather than ushering in a new era of justice as the public had hoped, the first act of the military was to put in detention those in

power at the time of the coup and also the most respected leaders of the second republic. Detaining President Osman and Prime Minister Hussen for over three years while knowing that they had not committed any crime and had honorably served the country demonstrated that justice and protection of public resources was not the real objective of the coup. By pursuing its own agenda the military discarded what was left of the rule of law and the division of power that was the hallmark of the second republic. Political violence became the grammar of governance and the civic groups became leaderless, thus leaving the platform for various sectarian factions to struggle for power and ensuring a prolonged life-span to the tyrannical regime. The political space was subsequently dominated by struggles among sectarian factions and the regime that progressively led to the demise of a national ethos.

8 Conclusion

> In the arena of African politics, Somalia has fared well. No coups, no civil wars, no internecine splits have marred its nine-year history. Its people—united by language, culture, and religion—form a national state which will probably remain intact for the foreseeable future. Elections for the presidency and parliament have demonstrated the system's ability to transfer power democratically. The country's ex-president and two former prime ministers are today all in parliament—not imprisoned, exiled, or dead.[1]

The American diplomat who authored these words in 1969 fittingly correlated the absence of "internecine splits" and the Somali state "remain[ing] intact for the foreseeable future" with the existence of genuine democracy. Government leaders and the political opposition needed to abstain from using violence and intimidation as instruments of politics for this system to work. Somalia's most critically minded and eminent journalist in the 1960s, Yusuf Dhuhul, confirmed the veracity of this association in an essay he wrote thirty years after Osman and Hussen left office.[2] Less than a month before he left office, President Osman warned the new lords of Mogadishu, in particular, and Somalis in general, that "without democracy nothing good can happen."[3] Unfortunately the post-1967 Somali leadership and particularly the military regime were blinded by their lust for personal rule and turned Osman's prophetic words into reality. Once this time-tested axiom was violated and violence became the grammar of political life, a terrible tragedy slowly engulfed Somalia. Repression and violence provoked countervenom and brutality, and the cycle of degeneration in time turned Africa's pioneering democratic country into what Ahmed Samatar aptly labeled "shipwreck politics"—culminating in the world's paradigm of collapsed state.[4]

Despite the political failure of Somali leaders for the past forty years, the democratic lessons and ethical leadership Osman, Hussen, and their civic associates left behind offer valid lessons today for Somalia and for much of Africa the same as they did in 1967. Regrettably, both students of Somalia and those interested in African leadership and democracy have lost sight of this critical chapter in postcolonial African political history. Contributors to the important book *Legacies of Power: Leadership Change and Former Presidents in African Politics* claimed that no African political leader left office after losing an election between 1960 and 1979.[5] Its editors Roger Southall, Neo Simutanyi, and John Daniels not only failed to note that President Osman of Somalia left office after he was

defeated in 1967 but also missed the unprecedented event that his departure was. As a matter of fact, the next president on the continent to leave office after he was defeated in an election was Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia in 1991. Not only was Osman's departure from the presidency a historic act that bucked a postcolonial African political trend but his tenure also signified the equally vital but unusual democratization process that he and Prime Minister Hussen led.

Africa's First Democrats makes two major contributions to the practice and analysis of African politics. The first is historical in nature and most pertinent to the Somali Republic, while the second is wider in scope and addresses the dynamics of leadership and democratization in the continent.

Lessons for Somalia

Danta in ay xaraashaan	To auction common cause
Danbigana xanbaartaan	Carry the burden of betrayal
Sharaftana ay xuuraan	Surrender their dignity
Isticmaar la xididaan	Have a courtship with the colonialist
Ama xeer la yeeshaan	or have a contract with them
Kuwe ka xila furey	They who faithfully rejected all of this and upheld common cause

—Mohamed Ibrahim Warsame (Hadrawi), "Xamarey Manabadbaa" (2014)

Leave the dead some room to dance.

—Wole Soyinka, "A Dance in the Forests"[6]

Much of the literature and the international policy debates on Somalia in the last thirty years depict the country either as an aberration to postcolonial political currents or more generally an outlier in the normal political economic paradigm. Central to these notions has been the conflation of cultural and political identity in such a way that complex political and social processes have been reduced to a single variable, the clan.[7] The political history narrated in this book tells a vastly more complex story than those peddled in recent decades. Just when the political world has been debating democracy and acting on democratic ethos, the vast majority of those involved in Somali affairs have failed to look beyond the "commonsense narrative of the tribe"[8] and unearth the archaeology of Somali politics.

Africa's first democrats left a legacy that contradicts nearly all the assumptions and discourses that have heretofore dominated the Somali political landscape. However, the international community and its intellectual partners offer prescriptions that reify sectarian differences among Somalis and endorse undemocratic political programs that have perpetuated Somali vulnerability. *Africa's First Democrats* provides an antidote to this agenda that is anchored in Somali political history and that is faithful to Somali cultural values.

The narrative on the early lives of Osman and Hussen showcases that children from all social and regional backgrounds can overcome extraordinary obstacles and rise to the top to lead a nation. Osman and Hussen bravely confronted challenges not through some tribal orientation but as socially embedded individuals, a characteristic vital to the formation of their characters. If ever there was a reminder that all Somali children have the potential to add much value to the well-being of the country, the early lives of Osman and Hussen bear witness to that possibility. Rather than being broken by fascist cruelties, they rose to liberate the country and leave a larger-than-life legacy for an entire continent. The moral of those early years is that current political practice in Somalia of feeding young men and women a divisive ideology, which has brought so much destruction, can only produce national and communal degeneracy. Those who want to reverse the course of the last forty years must pay careful attention to the youthful years of Osman and Hussen as a model. Self-reliance, discipline, independence, and devotion to the common good were the central qualities developed in those early years and, they are now in short supply in Somali elite circles. Redeveloping a culture in which such qualities are deeply valued by all is absolutely paramount.

Beyond the individual effort lies the strength of associational life. The history of the Somali Youth League highlights key political facts that made the liberation and unification of two Somali territories possible but that have been neglected by several generations to their peril. The first fact was the necessity of principled organization united to defeat colonialism and forge a common national destiny. Second, SYL embodied such a strategy and made some headway in reversing decades-long Italian colonial social engineering to transmute genealogical differences between Somalis into state-sponsored political discord. The nationalist party attempted to transform Somali cultural commonalities into collective political institutions on a national scale. Pursuit of and commitment to this collective project paid dividends, and Somali digression from those canons has led to instability and failure. Third, the history of the SYL and the Somali liberation more generally contradicts much of the expatriate-driven Somali historical writing that has couched Somali nationalism in the language of irredentism rather than in the discourse of democracy and self-determination. The discussion of Somali struggles against colonialism in the context of the Cold War discloses that the Somalis' aim was to have a democratic opportunity to determine their fate and resist colonial rulers molding their future. The four-powers commission's rejection of Somali demands for unification and the UN's decision to reimpose fascist rule on Southern Somalia constituted an early warning to Somalis that democratic rights were not the most cherished principles in international affairs during the Cold War. About fifteen years after the UN rode roughshod over Somali rights, President Osman and President Kenyatta met to discuss the fate of the Somali territory in Kenya:

> Kenyatta's plea to Aden [Osman] [to keep the Somali territory where it was] hinged on the fact that Kenya [is] composed of many ethnic and tribal groupings cutting across boundaries with Uganda, Ethiopia, and Tanzania as well as with Somalia. Proceeding on [the] basis [of] ethnic affiliation would disrupt integrity of Kenya and threaten its very existence. In rebutting this argument [for division by ethnic affiliation], Aden made [the] point that tribal groups other than Somalis seemed to be satisfied with their lot and therefore no question of destroying integrity of Kenya arises. Furthermore, he reasserted that Somalis were more than a tribe, they were a nation. At this juncture, Kenyatta referred to that part of Somalia once known as [Jubaland] which [was] once part of Kenya and had been ceded by British to Italians following World War I. How would Aden, feel if [the] Kenyan Government were to demand return of this territory? Aden sailed into this one like a practiced negotiator, saying I am glad you asked that question. He for his part would be delighted to see [Northern Frontier District] and [Jubaland] territories handled in exactly [the] same fashion, that is, giving people of each area free opportunity to express their wishes on a self-determination basis.[9]

Osman's apt response, showing confidence in the population's democratic right and the Somali Republic's willingness to respect their wishes, became a challenge to which President Kenyatta could not respond.

Much of the dominant expatriate writings on Somali political conflict are couched in the language of tribalism. The material evidence presented in the volume proves that political dissonance among SYL leadership was not driven by innate genealogical loyalty but, on the contrary, by contrasting worldviews and political interests and ambitions. Finally, the history of the SYL and Somali liberation also reveals the Ethiopian emperor's attempt, in the faint hope of absorbing all of Somalia, to thwart the desire of Northern and Southern Somalis to unify.

The political history of the first and second republics highlights the dynamics of the unification of the two Somali territories. What is most refreshing here is the democratic constitutional process taken to unify the two territories on the basis of mutual respect and common vision for the future of the Somali people. Transforming two very different colonial traditions into a functioning republic was not an easy task but one that was successfully accomplished. The towering challenge that the republic subsequently faced was the institutionalization of a democratic system of government. This involved not only instituting free and fair election but also operationalizing a clear division of responsibilities among the branches of government. These reforms generated a lot of political heat and induced splits within parliament and among the top leaders of the republic. President Osman confronted the challenge with utmost determination, putting his own presidency on the line. For three years Osman, Hussen, and their associates embarked on the most daring democratic reform attempted on the continent for the next three decades. As the leading reformists they lived up to their ideals and

walked away from power when Osman lost the presidential election. Thoughtful Somalis now look back to this period with a great deal of reverence. This experience is pregnant with practical lessons for prevailing political maladies, as well as the study of democracy, leadership, and political conflict and culture in the country.

Without Osman as the anchor of the republic and Hussen at the helm of operations of the government, the anticorruption drive and governance reform of 1964–1967 came to an abrupt end when power was transferred to a new team on July 1, 1967. President Sharmarkee and Prime Minister Egal did not articulate a coherent agenda for advancing the accomplishments of their predecessors to the next level. Instead, the new government's political program was aimed at consolidating its grip on power rather than deepening the democratic process that had enabled it to attain power. The four central aspirations of the second republic, democratic accountability, anticorruption, competent public service, and common citizenship, were quickly cast aside. Rather than intensifying the drive against malfeasance, the regime dropped it from its program, as the International Monetary Fund noted so clearly after the parliamentary election of 1969.[10] Moreover, civil service reform was set aside and then overturned. Corruption flourished and the professional independence of the judiciary and civil service were fundamentally compromised. Finally, short of abolishing the constitution and disbanding parliament, the regime strove, in some instances successfully, to reverse democratic gains made in the previous seven years. The absence of a serious political agenda to focus the attention of the population, the proliferation of corrupt practices, and the rigging of the 1969 parliamentary election precipitated the murder of the president. Just when the regime was on the cusp of turning the country into a single-party state, the military staged a coup that dropped the curtain on the third republic and foreclosed any prospects for a return to democracy for decades to come. Herein lies the beginning of the wrong political turn in the country's history. The rise of sectarian, authoritarian, and deeply corrupt political leaders has been the source of all the mayhem rather than some deep-seated traditional tribalism.

Given the pioneering accomplishments of Africa's first democrats, what political lessons might be gleaned from this sobering experience to reverse the political trends that have dominated Somalia since 1967? Three lessons stand out as the most relevant. The first is a warning to those who aspire to attain political leadership positions in the country. They ought to heed the reality that nearly all of those who have come to power since 1967 were either killed in office or imprisoned or had to flee the country once they were out of power. In contrast Osman lived on his farm along the Shabelle River or in his home in Mogadishu without fear for nearly forty years. No one ever threatened him, even at the height of the civil war in the 1990s. He enjoyed such admiration and respect because neither

he nor his closest political associate, Hussen, ever used the authority that was entrusted to them to prolong their tenure in power or suppress their political opponents. Political leaders who came after Osman and Hussen have lived in disgrace or insecurity because of their misrule. Aspirant politicians who desire leadership must choose between two contrasting futures: a life in exile and shame or worse and its alternative of respect and refuge at home. A second lesson that the politically conscious segments of the Somali population could learn from this experience is that the resurrection of a democratic Somali state from the ashes of the civil war cannot be realized by the institutionalization of political ethnicity, the fragmentation of the country into tribal fiefdoms, incompetent political leadership, and corruption. Instead, the way back to peace, grace, and democracy is to reverse these processes and cultivate civic belonging among citizens. Further, rebuilding a Somali state that is transparent, democratic, and effective in delivering service to the population requires that competence and merit become the heart of the governance project. Lastly, members of the international community involved in Somali affairs who have spent a lot of political capital and resources on accenting political difference among Somalis by instigating or endorsing sectarian agendas have failed to advance the peace process. Their effort has been in vain and shall remain so unless they absorb the wisdom of Africa's first democrats.

Somali Contribution to the Study and Practice of African Leadership

African liberation has not lived up to its promise of undoing colonial tyranny and underdevelopment for two interrelated reasons. First, most postcolonial regimes maintain, often reproduce, and sometimes make worse the tyrannical political-economic structures imperial regimes left behind. Second, reforming inherited conditions is a daunting task that requires African leadership of extraordinary quality and including the sagacity and humility to distinguish between personal political ambitions and the enduring interests of their people. The pioneering Ghanaian writer Ayi Kwei Armah's novel *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* pithily captures the depth of political decay in the 1960s.[11] Inept leadership of this kind has dominated much of the political landscape, and it is here where the log-jam to progress has been most pronounced. Because of the general dearth of superior leadership, advocates for political and governance reform on the continent rarely bothered to look for African experience that merits careful scrutiny and that might provide appropriate democratic lessons to the rest of the continent. Somali democratic regimes and leaders provide authentic African experience for those concerned about postcolonial African democracy and the search for practical models of exceptional leadership.[12]

The political practice of Africa's first democrats made six groundbreaking contributions to the understanding of African democratic leadership: the struggle for free and fair election and discipline in the dominant party to play by the rules, respect for the division of powers between three branches of government, professionalization of public service, avoidance of the seduction of power, resistance to corruption, and grace in the face of electoral defeat. The combination of these efforts amounted to an antidote against temptation to usurp public power by those in position of authority.

First, Osman and Hussen went further than any of their African peers as they genuinely sought free and fair elections with the clear knowledge that this could lead to their political demise. Playing by the constitutional rules and accepting legitimate defeats in the polls is one of the major hallmarks of democrats anywhere. Africa's first democrats went beyond this because they tried to tame the excess of their own political party in power. Osman and Hussen chastised the SYL and its government, particularly before independence and then in the 1963 and 1964 elections, for trying to muzzle political opponents. In one instance Osman cheered when the Supreme Court overturned the parliamentary election in the port city of Marka where his party claimed victory. On other occasions, Osman mediated between the ruling party and the opposition, but he did not hesitate to denounce the opposition when he found them insincere in their demands. Here, Osman and Hussen were among a handful of postcolonial leaders who censured their party colleagues' attempts to retain or extend their authority through whatever means necessary. Osman's political motto was that SYL needed no more than 51 percent of the vote to govern the country legitimately. No other African leader at the time or since has had such a commitment.[13]

Second, an early signal that Africa's first democrats were unusual leaders was the way they dealt with the 1961 coup leaders. Unlike any other leader elsewhere on the continent, they allowed the courts to have a free hand in dealing with the coup makers. Although Osman and Hussen vehemently disagreed with the court's final judgment in acquitting the renegade officers, they decided not to take the case to the court of appeals. Instead, they let the verdict stand for the sake of national integration and, more importantly, to signal the independence of the judiciary in the new republic.

Third, Prime Minister Hussen and President Osman sought to create a professional merit-based civil service establishment that could deliver services for the population. Hussen took the lead in implementing the far-reaching recommendation of the UN-led commission on civil service and in the process terminated large numbers of government personnel in senior positions who lacked the skills necessary to carry out their duties or who were complicit in corruption or disloyal to the country. Although Osman saluted Hussen for having the courage to embark on this reform, he had some reservations about some of the public

rhetoric the prime minister used. Despite his reservations, Osman turned down the petitioners' appeals for his help, but he urged them to seek recourse through the courts. Osman's approach to this matter demonstrated beyond any shadow of doubt the centrality, for a democratic order, of the division of responsibilities among the prime minister and the president, the legislature, and the judiciary. Such a radical civil service reform and the transparent way it was done predated widespread reform in Africa by at least three decades.

Fourth, it is rare that postcolonial African leaders and their families have not amassed wealth as a result of being presidents or senior ministers. Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, Omar Bongo of Gabon, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Nigeria's various leaders (particularly Sani Abacha), Angola's José Eduardo dos Santos, Paul Biya of Cameroon, Teodoro Obiang of Equatorial Guinea, and most recently Jacob Zuma of South Africa illustrate utter abuse of authority and maleficence on a grand scale on the continent. Rather than Osman and his family accumulating wealth, he kept his office expenditures to a minimum and used the savings from the presidential budget to build a guest mansion, belonging to the government, where official international visitors were housed.[14] Prime Minister Hussen was even more parsimonious than the president. When the military regime investigated the bank accounts of former political leaders, they discovered that Hussen's account had a deposit of a mere $500. African peers of these Somali leaders are very rare, as most postcolonial leaders used the national treasury as their own private reserve. Further, Osman's disdain for corruption and money in politics had no parallel in postcolonial Africa. He not only avoided using his perch in state power to amass private wealth but also kept his hands clean when it came to political graft during the contest for the presidency in 1967. While the opposition was using cash to buy votes from parliamentarians and promising them future ministerial appointments, Osman remained steadfast in opposing both tactics. In fact, he went further by refusing to accept cash gifts from wealthy Somalis who pleaded with him to take their money and use it to pay for the support of the MPs. Many African leaders elsewhere used the full scale of state resources and any other means to "win" elections; Osman and his teammate, Hussen, regarded public resources as sacrosanct.

Fifth, President Osman and Prime Minister Hussen were mindful of the seduction of power, the pomp of high office, and the corruption that can follow. From the early 1950s, then, they remained alert to its pitfalls. For example, when Osman became the Speaker of the National Assembly during the trusteeship period, he warned his colleagues in the assembly to use their housing and other allowances to improve their private homes rather than move to the residences provided by the government. He was concerned that they might get used to the comforts of power and then become reluctant to leave office. Osman led by example, maintaining his private and rather modest living quarters even after moving

to the presidential palace. As for Hussen, he owned only two, vacant, plots in Mogadishu. The only other African leader whose modesty and self-command came close to that of Osman and Hussen was Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. Even here, it must be pointed out, the Somali team surpassed the Tanzanian president in their dedication to open and constitutional political order.

Sixth, the signature mark of Osman's and Hussen's political maturity was their observance of the cardinal rule of democracy: graceful acceptance of electoral defeat.

Africa's first democrats were quintessential constitutionalists for their entire lives and most acutely during the seven years when they led the country. Their engagement in politics was a calling to serve their people rather than an instrument for self-aggrandizement. Scholarly works on democracy and leadership in Africa have labored hard to narrate the story of what an accountable system of government might or could be like. Fortunately, the history of Africa's first democrats offers an African political praxis and a model for others to emulate that embodies the hopes and dreams of freedom and independence. For both of them, democracy was, in the memorable expression of C. Wright Mills, "some kind of collective self-control over the mechanics of history itself."[15]

Coda

Among the lacuna in African political studies is attention to democratic leadership and accountable government on the continent that was homegrown during the first three decades after colonialism. The pioneering work of Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg focuses on the dominant types of leaders on the continent. They were nondemocratic and did little to establish good systems of authority during those years.[16] However, their volume and others offer no alternative models of democratic practice in Africa. Consequently, the story told in *Africa's First Democrats* picks up from where Jackson and Rosberg left off and provides an instantiation of democratic African leadership and praxis. While Jackson and Rosberg focus on the role of the individual leader in the making of African postcolonial states, the Somali context highlights the interactive dynamic among internal, external, and individual and collective forces that shaped the nature of political authority in the republic. In particular, it underscores the role colonial legacy and the Cold War played in hemming in the latitude of liberty for political action in independent Africa. Further, the Somali case demonstrates that democracy in postcolonial Africa faces both domestic and external forces that severely circumscribe the actions of the most genuinely democratic leaders.

President Osman and Prime Minister Hussen confronted a classic conundrum of 1960s postcolonial circumstance that is captured by the Somali saying "Hadii aan hadalo wa af salax ku dagii hadii kalana bal xoolaha waxa lagu hayo eega" (Damned if we do and damned if we don't). Prime Minister Hussen, who

managed President Osman's reelection effort, had a difficult problem: on the one hand, he was well aware that his friend and political mentor was diffident about serving a full second term as president, which did not prompt a lot of enthusiasm among some of Osman's supporters; on the other hand, the prime minister knew that Osman was firmly opposed to enticing MPs to his side by stooping to the indignity of bribing them, despite their political opponents offering MPs cash and promises of ministerial portfolios. Thus, the challenge for Hussen and his team was how to generate enthusiasm among those of Osman's supporters who were not fully committed while maintaining and protecting his government's anticorruption reputation. The prime minister and his team made the deliberate decision to grant small financial favors to a few MPs who claimed to be Osman's supporters but who were tempted by the more generous offers of the opposition. Hussen's balancing act was meant to preserve the government's corruption-free reputation while giving Osman's candidacy a fighting chance to survive the cascade of corrupt politics.

President Osman and Prime Minister Hussen were democratic idealists in circumstances that required a dose of Machiavellian management of the political process to ensure democratic consolidation.[17] Driven by their experience under colonialism, these two democrats had no desire to control the political process in any way that favored their tenure and that would subvert their ethos. In so doing, they missed recognizing that the establishment of democratic government is always a work in progress, and that the beginning phase of the journey requires careful monitoring and guiding so as to consolidate foundational institutions of the state. Otherwise, ambitious and self-serving political actors will override societal needs by unfairly exploiting the openness of the system. How to manage such a formative and fragile period has been one of the major burdens confronting Africa's most important democracy, South Africa.

The moral of *Africa's First Democrats* is that future studies on the nature and contours of leadership and governance in Africa must look at local actors who have practiced, at whatever political level, the spirit and the word of democratic governance. Such experiences offer materials that would resonate with local but flexible values rather than purely imported and cagelike frameworks. This is particularly so in imagining a culturally (not tribalistically) relevant model of leadership and political praxis. What is needed now is to extend this work, in a theoretically and empirically grounded manner, to other progressive experiences on the continent. In that spirit, Africa's first democrats, despite lasting only a decade, provide lessons that can help current or future African democrats to imagine possible and ennobling futures.

Finally, the reader might be wondering what explains Osman's and Hussen's tenacious attachment to democratic and ethical politics, which many of their African contemporaries lacked. To be sure, there is no magic answer to this puzzle.

I think it was a confluence of conditions. The version of history that credits major historical transformation to big men might consider Osman and Hussen to have been two extraordinary men whose political work should be treated as exceptional. There is an element of truth to this rendering of history. Nonetheless, I do not think that is sufficient explanation. On the contrary, I think a combination of personal qualities, early life experiences, cultural context, and the political climate at the time created an ambience that enabled them to *understand* the national task differently than many of their Somali and African peers.

Many African liberation leaders came from humble backgrounds, but none had such desperately harrowing struggles so early in their lives as Africa's first democrats did. A reciprocal cultural community offered a limited safety net. However, their extended families did not have the means to shelter the two from the cruelties of the late colonial period. The blend of these factors enabled Osman and Hussen to develop two precious characteristics: courage and principled pragmatism. In the first case, they resisted colonial assumptions and confronted postcolonial conventions; in the latter, they adopted flexible yet righteous means in the pursuit of their objectives and encounters with others.

Their personal struggles to get minimum education and employment, under a bloody-fisted fascist rule, deeply ingrained in them the need for self-command, perseverance, and self-reliance. Their ability to gain education and employment reinforced their sense of pragmatism, determination, and optimism. Further, it seems that early exposure to a nondogmatic version of Islam reinforced their self-confidence, ascetic lifestyles, and firm ethical values. For example, during his presidency, Osman used to have nightmares about failing to live up to his oath of office and remained anxious about what such disappointment might mean for him in the afterlife. Similarly, Hussen had profoundly internalized Islamic and highly valued Somali edicts of justice, fairness, and rectitude. Thus, unlike many left-wing and right-wing political leaders in the Muslim world and in Africa who have used the faith as a cover to conceal their perverted personal and political agendas, Osman and Hussen developed a remarkably distinct and pragmatic, if not rational and evolving, view of the relationship between cosmopolitan Islam, the state, and the conduct of public affairs. They lived by the ethical bounds of their faith and virtuous elements of the native tradition, using the mixture as a shield against the allure of power, self-flattery, and abuse of office. Their attachment to progressive Islam and their anticolonial experience made them leery of the totalizing nature of prevailing ideologies such as communism and capitalism. These values made the Non-Aligned Movement a highly agreeable international political home for them.

Last, unlike Nkrumah, Kenyatta, and Nyerere, who were all educated in the West and who appear to have absorbed and then become tethered to pro-Western ideology, as did Kenyatta, or had socialist propensities, as did Nkrumah and

Nyerere, Osman and Hussen retained a high degree of intellectual independence and, therefore, maintained their distance from the bipolarity of the times. The evidence presented in the book suggests that Osman's and Hussen's progressive pragmatism was anchored in a counterhegemonic weltanschauung. Their perspective was informed by an amalgam of pride in the best of Somali mores, belief in the soundness of generous Islamic piety, equality among human beings, confidence in their own capacity to compete with others, and a strong attachment to the Somali cause.

Yet the peculiarities of Osman and Hussen, as told in this book, do not make them sui generis among the Somali people of their age. Others in the civil service, the academy, and the private sector shared those qualities but were not in a position of political authority to demonstrate their talents and patriotism at the national scale. The same can be said about others on the African continent. But for the Somalis, the current situation is infinitely more daunting. For starters, the decomposition of the old republic is thorough; the triple curse of political tribalism, maleficence, and incompetence is strong; the regional political milieu is typified by a competitive subimperialist appetite primarily geared toward turning Somalis into supplicant and disunited clients; and the weighty global actors are preoccupied with higher-value concerns in other parts of the world. In such a setting, to mount an emancipatory history of creative hope and practical revival will not be easy. Still, Somalis of this epoch have no other viable option but to invest in the creation of a vision-driven, inclusive, and resilient national organization that can effectively respond to these supreme liabilities. Only through such a structure would individuals of talent and commitment have a chance to come to the fore and mobilize others for what is certain to be a vertiginous ascent. But to get there, Somalis will have to begin with restocking their impoverished civic capital.

> To break through the barriers of stagnation in a backward country, to ignite the imagination of men [and women], . . . a stronger medicine is needed than the promise of better allocation of resources or even of the lower price of bread. . . . What is needed . . . is faith—faith . . . that the golden age lies not behind but ahead. . . . [This] calls for a New Deal in emotions.[18]

The grim times need not block the imagining of a drastically different future than the humiliating present. In this admittedly hard quest, the personal lives of Osman and Hussen and their devotion to high political ideals are available to inspire a new generation.

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Notes

Preface and Acknowledgments

1. See Abdi Samatar, "Genocidal Politics and the Somali Famine," *Al Jazeera*, July 30, 2011, http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/ opinion/ 2011/07/201172613525616983l.html; Abdi Samatar, "Ethiopian Invasion of Somalia, US Warlordism and AU Shame," *Review of African Political Economy* 34, no. 111 (2007): 153–154; and Food and Agricultural Organization, *Mortality among Populations of Southern and Central Somalia Affected by Severe Food Insecurity and Famine during 2010–2012* (Rome: FAO, 2013).

2. Thandika Mkandawire, "Thinking about Developmental States in Africa," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 25 (2001): 289–313.

3. Abdi Samatar, "Debating Somali Identity in a British Tribunal: The Case of the BBC Somali Service," *Bildhaan: International Journal of Somali Studies* 10 (2010): 36–88.

1. Leadership in Africa

1. M. Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994); Samir Amin, "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa: Origins and Contemporary Forms," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 10, no. 4 (1972): 503–524; Neil Parsons, "Khama and Co. and the Jousse Trouble, 1910–1916," *Journal of African History* 14, no. 3 (1975): 383–408; Ben Magubane, *The Political Economy of Race and Class in South Africa* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979); Stephen Kanfer, *The Last Empire: De Beers, Diamonds and the World* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993); Govan Mbeki, *The Peasant Revolts* (London: Penguin, 1964); Allen Isaacman, *Cotton Is the Mother of Poverty: Peasants, Work and Rural Struggle in Colonial Mozambique, 1938–1961* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1996); Mahmood Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976); Mahmood Mamdani, "Race and Ethnicity as Political Identities in the African Context," in *Keywords: Identity*, ed. Nadia Tazi (New York: Other Press, 2004), 1–24.

2. Lapido Adamolekun, "Political Leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa: From Giants to Dwarfs," *International Political Science Review* 9, no. 2 (1988): 95–106.

3. Abdi Samatar, "Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models: Botswana versus Somalia," *Third World Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (1997): 687–708.

4. Elizabeth Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa: From the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *Patrice Lumumba* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014); Horace Campbell, *Global NATO and the Catastrophic Failure in Libya* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2013).

5. M. Crawford Young, *The Postcolonial State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960–2010* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012); Ludo De Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba* (London: Verso, 2001); John Cartwright, "Some Constraints upon African Political Leadership," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 11, no. 3 (1977): 435–453; Stephen Brown

and Paul Kaiser, "Democratisation in Africa: Attempts, Hindrances and Prospects," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 6 (2007): 1131–1149.

6. Judith Tendler, *Good Government in the Tropics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

7. World Bank, *Adjustment in Africa: Reform, Results, and the Road Ahead* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1989); World Bank, *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1994); A. Olukoshi, "Structural Adjustment and Governance in Africa: Some Reflections," *Nigerian Journal of International Affairs* 18, no. 2 (1992): 92–104; Peter Nunnenkamp, "What Donors Mean by Good Governance: Heroic Ends, Limited Means, and Traditional Dilemmas of Development Cooperation," *IDS Bulletin* 26, no. 2 (1995): 9–16; Thandika Mkandawire, "Adjustment, Political Conditionality and Democratization in Africa," in *Democratisation Processes in Africa: Problems and Prospects*, ed. Eshetu Chole and Jibrin Ibrahim (Dakar, Africa: CODESRIA, 1995), 83–99. Even an index for good governance has been developed, the Ibrahim Index of African Governance; see http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/iiag/. Also see Marina Ottaway, *Africa's New Leaders: Democracy or State Reconstruction* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999); Joseph Oloka-Onyango, "'New-Breed' Leadership, Conflict, and Reconstruction in the Great Lakes Region of Africa: A Sociopolitical Biography of Uganda's Yoweri Kaguta Museveni," *Africa Today* 50, no. 3 (2004): 29–52; Walter Oyugi and Afrifa K. Gitonga, eds., *Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa* (London: James Currey, 1988); Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja and Margaret C. Lee, eds., *The State and Democracy in Africa* (Harare, Zimbabwe: African Association of Political Science, 1997); and Stephen Ocheni and Basil Nwankwo, "Re-engineering African Political Leadership through Good Governance for Sustainable Development and Growth in Africa," *Canadian Social Science* 8, no. 3 (2012): 16–21.

8. John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman, "Coping with the Contradictions: The Development of the Colonial State in Kenya, 1895–1914," *Journal of African History* 20, no. 4 (1979): 487–505. Going to the contradictory character of the colonial state is key to understanding the nature of the postcolonial state.

9. Some of these ideas are laid out in Abdi Ismail Samatar and Ahmed I. Samatar, *The African State: Reconsiderations* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002).

10. The most recent and obvious African leaders who turned horrific political crises into opportunities for reconstruction and development are Nelson Mandela of South Africa and Paul Kagame of Rwanda. Mandela and his African National Congress concentrated on turning the legacy of apartheid into an era of reconciliation and peace, and that agenda focused on rebuilding the civic fabric of democratic South Africa. In a similar fashion Kagame and his Rwanda Patriotic Front halted the genocide and turned a historic page by rebuilding the population's common political identity and becoming one of Africa's most effective states.

11. Leroy Vail, ed., *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

12. Samir Amin, "Accumulation and Development: A Theoretical Model," *Review of African Political Economy* 1, no. 1 (1974): 9–26.

13. To understand the critical role leaders can and have played in the formative years of a nation, see Quett Ketumile Joni Masire, *Very Brave or Very Foolish? Memoirs of an African Democrat*, ed. Stephen R. Lewis Jr. (Gaborone: Macmillan Botswana, 2006); N. Parsons, W. Henderson, and T. Tlou, *Seretse Khama, 1921–1980* (Gaborone: Macmillan Botswana, 1995); Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (London: Abacus, 1994); Chambi Chachage and Annar Cassam, eds., *Africa's Liberation: The Legacy of Nyerere* (Kampala, Uganda: Pambazuka, 2010); B. G. Petruk, *Julius Nyerere: Humanist, Politician, Thinker* (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania:

Mkuki na Nyota, 2005); A. B. Assensoth, *African Political Leadership: Jomo Kenyatta, Kwame Nkrumah, and Julius Nyerere* (Malabar, FL: Krieger, 1998); Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York: International, 1971); and Irving Markovitz, *Leopold Sedar Senghor and the Politics of Negritude* (New York: Atheneum, 1969).

14. Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Ruth Berins Collier, *Regimes in Tropical Africa: Changing Forms of Supremacy, 1945–1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Ottaway, *Africa's New Leaders*; Oloka-Onyango, "'New-Breed' Leadership, Conflict, and Reconstruction in the Great Lakes Region of Africa"; Oyugi and Gitonga, *Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa*.

15. Jackson and Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa*.

16. Ibid., 235.

17. Ibid., 143.

18. Ibid., 83–84 (emphasis in original).

19. The Ethiopian emperor was an Autocrat rather than a political Prince given that he managed Ethiopia as a fiefdom.

20. Jackson and Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa*, 182.

21. Ibid., 184.

22. David Birmingham, *Kwame Nkrumah: The Father of African Nationalism* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1998).

23. Even Botswana, which began to emerge as different kind of a postcolonial regime on the continent by early 1980s, was dismissed by Jackson and Rosberg. "By 1979 there were only two of the original constitutional rulers of the 1960s left in Black Africa: President Dauda K. Jawara of The Gambia and Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana. In these cases it be may that constitutional government has been retained because the constitutions of independence contain a bias favoring the retention of power by these men and their parties, giving little chance to the opposition to win power electorally." Jackson and Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa*, 85. For a contrasting discussion of Botswana, see Young, *The Postcolonial State in Africa*; and Abdi Samatar, *An African Miracle: State and Class Leadership and Colonial Legacy in Botswana Development* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999).

24. Ottaway, *Africa's New Leaders*.

25. Abdi Samatar, "The Ethiopian Election of 2005: A Bombshell and Turning Point?" *Review of African Political Economy* 32, nos. 104–105 (2005): 466–473. More recently, the ruling party in Ethiopia claimed to have won 100 percent of parliamentary seats in the 2015 election.

26. Some of these are in part a product of external actors—for example, Libya. Campbell, *Global NATO and the Catastrophic Failure in Libya*.

27. More recent studies that also missed the Somali experience include Michael Bratton and Nicolas Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Leonardo A. Villalón and Peter VonDoepp, eds., *The Fate of Africa's Democratic Experiments: Elites and Institutions* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

28. Walter Lippman, quoted in B. Barber, *A Passion for Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 113.

29. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

30. Aden Abdulle Osman, diary, October 1961. Copies of all diary entries cited throughout the book are in the author's possession. All diary entries translated by the author. Osman was invited by President Nkrumah and paid a state visit to Ghana in October 1961.

31. Robert Bates, "Democracy in Africa: A Very Short History," *Social Research* 77, no. 4 (2010): 1133–1148.

32. It would appear that the Somali team and process fulfilled the three definitional criteria for democracy. Quoting others, Robert Bates notes, "Democracy can refer to political competition, and in particular, open competition among rival political parties. Others . . . argue that to be democratic, such a competition must take place within a setting infused with attendant rights and freedoms. . . . Others . . . would insist that even were a polity to exhibit these attributes, it could not be labeled democratic until one party had surrendered power to another upon losing a national election." Ibid., 1133.

33. The five domains were British Somaliland, the British Northern Frontier Districts, French Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, and the Ogaden and the Reserved Area. British Somaliland and the British Northern Frontier Districts were under the United Kingdom. France controlled French Somaliland, Italy controlled Italian Somaliland, and Ethiopia controlled Ethiopian Somaliland (the Ogaden and the Reserved Area). Mohamed Osman Omar, *The Scramble in the Horn of Africa: History of Somalia, 1827–1977* (Mogadishu: Somali Publications, 2001); John Drysdale, *The Somali Dispute* (New York: Praeger, 1964); A. M. Brockett, "The British Somaliland Protectorate to 1905" (PhD diss., Lincoln College, Oxford University, 1975); Abdi Samatar, *The State and Rural Transformation in Northern Somalia, 1884–1986* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

34. For a discussion of this, see David Laitin and Said S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1987). For information on broader issues of nations without states, see Montserrat Guibernau, *Nations without States: Political Communities in a Global Age* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2000).

35. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: Eleventh Session, 415th Meeting*, June 9, 1952, p. 18.

36. Samatar, "Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models." See also Abdi Samatar, "Destruction of State and Society in Somalia: Beyond the Tribal Convention," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30, no. 4 (1992): 625–641.

37. Robert Hess, *Italian Colonialism in Somalia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

38. See Osman, diary, 1957, 1959, 1961, 1966, and 1967. Mandela was dubbed "the reluctant rebel" by Richard Stengel. See Richard Stengel, "The Reluctant Rebel," in *Nelson Mandela: A Hero's Journey*, ed. Time (New York: Time Books, 2014), vi–3. In the same spirit, Osman was a reluctant president.

2. Aden A. Osman

1. Some of the information in the chapter is based on notes penned by President Osman and translated from Italian by his eldest son, Abdulkadir Aden Abdulle. These notes are in the author's possession.

2. The sayyid had strong influence in the region, and his followers controlled areas in Hiraan adjacent to Belet Weyne.

3. Reer Hamar is one of the native groups of Mogadishu who speak a Somali dialect different from Osman's native tongue.

4. Years later Osman met the family's son in Mogadishu, where the son was a colonial policeman.

5. Nearly two decades later Osman met Hussein in Mogadishu, where Hussein worked.

6. Osman remembered that Ferrandi had a wooden leg.

7. Osman recalled that such generosity might have been limited to the commissioner. As the Italian contingent's numbers and strength grew, so did the injustice they imposed on Somalis.

8. The artillery barracks were called Fortino Molinari. Molinari was a military officer killed by Somalis or Ethiopians during the occupation of that part of the country.

9. Many years later Abukar lived in Mogadishu and was employed as a driver in the Somali government's Transport Department.

10. Osman received ten beesses, equivalent to one rupia, the silver coin of Italian Somaliland. The cost of living was very low, and ten beesses was sufficient to buy a meal for Osman.

11. Osman remembers this was in 1923 because of the arrival of the ship carrying the new Italian fascist governor of Somalia, Cesare Maria De Vecchi, one of the four leaders who marched on Rome with Mussolini, in the Mogadishu harbor. A year later, in 1924, the governor brought Italian settlers to Somalia, mainly from his home region, Piedmont. Somalis along the Shabelle River were dispossessed and turned into bonded laborers for the Janale irrigation project. Other Somalis in the Upper Juba region were enslaved to toil in their land to enrich the colonial settlers. Haji Farah later became a member of the Somali parliament.

12. Lee Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600–1900* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982).

13. The white settlers faced no reprisal and freely abused nonwhites, but a native or nonwhite could not defend him- or herself. Osman witnessed such behavior while he worked in a restaurant. One day at work in the restaurant, Osman observed Cesare Buffo, former commissioner and a medical doctor in Afgoi who became a plantation owner, mercilessly beat an old Arab watchman called Nucmaan. Nucmaan's crime was that he had not collected bags of acacia seeds from the garden of the governor's villa. The old man passively accepted the beating.

14. Liban later served as Osman's chief of staff during his presidency in the 1960s.

15. Osman had had difficulty in getting leave in the past, but he now received a leave of forty days, obtained from the directorate of personnel, after pledging to volunteer to fight in the Italo-Ethiopian War, which had just broken out. First he needed a health inspection. Officers laughed at the idea of Osman in a military uniform because, as he recalls in his notes, he looked too thin to "even lift the rifle." The doctor prescribed extended rest, which disqualified him from serving. October 3, 1935, was also the day Italy invaded and declared war on Ethiopia.

16. The boat trip was necessary because the unpaved road from Mogadishu to Galkayo was impassable during the rainy season.

17. When Osman became Speaker of the legislative assembly in 1956, he hired Warsame as clerk.

18. Osman bypassed Commissioner Prato, his superior, knowing that Prato would tell him he was indispensable to the service.

19. A policy of many colonial regimes was to remove troublemakers to remote regions where they could not influence others. The northeast region of Migiurtinia was such an area.

20. Reer Maanyo are members of fishing communities on the Benadir coast.

21. E. Sylvia Pankhurst, *Ex-Italian Somaliland* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951); Robert Hess, *Italian Colonialism in Somalia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

22. Hilowle Macalin became a member of parliament and the Somali Republic's minister of Defense in the 1960s.

23. Pankhurst, *Ex-Italian Somaliland*.

24. Many families who had been relatively wealthy lost their fortunes when they could not find labor. Furthermore, chiefs and their assistants threatened to ship some of these families to the plantation as slave labor unless they paid a bribe.

25. Around 1937 or 1938 for political reasons some Ethiopians prisoners and Shabelle laborers supplied by the Sultan Olol Dinle were brought to the agricultural district of Janale. The Ethiopians did not understand the local language, which made fleeing difficult, but the Shabelle laborers fled en masse toward the upper reaches of the Shabelle, where they were from.

During their serfdom, these laborers showed that they would not tolerate the way the forced laborers were treated, so many plantation owners removed them from work because they were a bad example to the domesticated local laborers.

26. See, e.g., Rafael Sabatini, *Captain Blood* (London: Houghton Mifflin, 1922).

3. Abdirazak H. Hussen

1. A significant portion of the chapter is derived from numerous interviews of Abdirazak H. Hussen by the author between 2002 and 2009.
2. The Quran is divided into thirty sections known as Juz. Each Juz has a number of chapters.
3. This story is fictionalized in Nadifa Mohamed, *Black Mamba Boy: A Novel* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2010).
4. Robert Hess, *Italian Colonialism in Somalia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).
5. Abdi I. Samatar, *The State and Rural Transformation in Northern Somalia, 1884–1986* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).
6. Colonial rule punished communities collectively for the crimes of individuals. The community's crime in this case was the killing of a British officer by an individual who was not caught.
7. Fitzpatrick had recently confiscated hundreds of camels from rural communities in the area and held them as ransom until the communities paid up—an unlegislated tax.
8. Lawaha became Hussen's chief of staff when he became prime minister of the Somali Republic in 1964.
9. Among these soldiers was Mohamed Jama Badmah, who would later become a close political friend of Hussen and a member of the Somali parliament.
10. Collins and the regional commissioner, Langley Smith, were womanizers who kept Somali concubines. This was illegal, and so their respective cooks were the supposed husbands of the women. Collins later wrote a book about his affairs and the beauty of Somali women. See Douglass Collins, *A Tear for Somalia* (London: Jarrods, 1960); and Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by author, Minneapolis, October 2000.

4. The Somali Youth League and the Nationalist Project, 1943–1960

1. Saadia Touval, *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963).
2. "Search for Texts of Leaflets Dropped by Royal Air Force on Somalia in 1941," 1947, FO 371/63242, UK National Archives, Kew Gardens, UK.
3. Contrary to the claims of earlier scholarship (see, e.g., Touval, *Somali Nationalism*), the British did not prod the young Somalis to form an organization, but the initiative came from the Somalis themselves. The British were keen that the organization not be a political party, as they did not want a political challenge from the natives in case British colonial tenure was prolonged. The aims and objectives of the club were as follows: "fraternity, equality, liberty and progress in that order, and in the expression 'Somalia for the Somalis.' The fundamental policy is considered to be the complete unification of the Somali race." Memorandum on native clubs in Somalia, 1947, p. 47, FO 371/63216, UK National Archives. I have been unable to find any official source to verify the claim that the British Military Administration urged the founding fathers to establish the club.

4. The compound that housed the club was in a rented space that doubled as a unique members-only tea and coffee shop and a meeting hall. One day a Somali police sergeant, Geeleh Kaba Jeeh, was denied service because he was not a member. He was not amused and ordered the shop's closure. At the police station he was told that since he was not a member, he could not demand service and could not order the club's closure. On the backside of the building were rooms in which members and youth were taught English.

5. The club's first president went to Addis Ababa several months after SYC's founding and had an interview with the Ethiopian emperor. The emperor told Sakhawa Diin that "he is in full sympathy with the principles of the SYC and is ready to accord them any assistance in his power. The Emperor also added that the flag of Ethiopia is the banner of all Africans." Memorandum on native clubs in Somalia, 49. The Ethiopian regime's sympathies were based on SYC's anti-Italian views, but beyond that the emperor was fishing for Somalis to support his agenda of obtaining Somalia as part of his empire.

6. Ibid., 48. The British administration did not support the club's antitribal stance as indicated by the following report by a senior officer: "It is noted that the promise not to reveal their tribes is causing a certain amount of worry to the Civil Affairs Officers in their capacity as Judicial Officers, as it is necessary in Court cases to record the tribe of the accused and of the witness. When asked for their tribes, members of the S.Y.C. now state simply that they are Somalis." Ibid.

7. Mohamed Yusuf Muro, interview by the author, Brussels, February 2004. Muro joined the SYC in 1943 as a teenager. He was appointed by Abdullahi Issa to work with the registrar and the cashier in 1947. He served as a member of the central committee from 1947 to 1955, when he went to Italy for education. He was elected as an MP and appointed as a minister in 1959.

8. Mohamed Yusuf Muro, "Xasuus," 1961, in author's possession. Osman had informed Abdullahi Issa about Pakistan's Islamic League before the name was suggested to the party.

9. Yassin Sharmarkee and Abdullahi Issa worked for the administration in Jowhar and Belet Weyne, respectively. The CC asked both of them to leave government service and devote full time to party operations. The monthly expense for SYL operations in 1948–1949 was 32,866 shillings (equivalent to 1,643 British pounds). The president and the secretary earned 3,600 and 3,000 shillings, respectively.

10. There was a strong push for a united Somalia under the British or the United States by the British chiefs of staff. See Memorandum on united Somalia from secretary of state for the colonies, June 22, 1946, FO 1015/132, UK National Archives.

11. Letter from War Office, April 1, 1946, FO 1015/132, UK National Archives. When the proposal was first made, the British administration did not want Ethiopia to get wind of it since it did not want to incite Ethiopia's opposition. However, by the time the second ministerial meeting took place, the British had informed the Ethiopian regime.

12. Draft telegram from War Office to general officer commanding-in-chief, East Africa, 1946, pp. 37–38, FO 371/53526, UK National Archives.

13. Ibid.

14. Robert Hess, *Italian Colonialism in Somalia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 192.

15. Telegram from T. Pike to secretary for the colonies, September 4, 1956, PREM 11/2582, UK National Archives. See also Letter from British delegation in Addis Ababa, September 30, 1947, WO 230/233, UK National Archives.

16. See the various articles and letters by Sylvia Pankhurst, an Ethiopian ally who supported Ethiopian opposition to Italian return to Somalia. See, for example, E. Sylvia Pankhurst, "The Horn of Africa," *New Statesman*, September 22, 1950, p. 197.

17. The Ethiopian government began to actively use some Somali elements to resist the movement to unite all Somalilands. Here is how the above British report described the Ethiopian initiative to R. G. Howe: "There are [*sic*] also evidence of Ethiopian propaganda in British Somaliland (presumably intensified, if not instigated, as a result of your talks with the Ethiopian Foreign Minister). The object of a tour being undertaken by an English-speaking member of Isaakia Association of Kenya is stated to be to warn the Somalis that plans were made, in the guise of a scheme for a "Greater Somaliland" designed to place them under the government of Kenya (which Somalis in British Somaliland are apt to regard as a foreign and hostile country owing no allegiance to the King). This emissary was proceeding to visit the Somali community in Aden after touring the more important centres in British Somaliland." Letter from Brigadier F. G. Drew, May 9, 1946, FO 371/53526, UK National Archives.

18. This petition for a united Somalia was signed on August 17, 1946, while the one opposed to the Bevin plan was signed on September 11, 1946. Among the signatories of the first petition was Haji Ibrahim Egal, the father of the future political leader of the Somali National League. Petition from British Somaliland elders for united Somalia, August 17, 1946, FO 371/53526, UK National Archives; Petition opposing united Somalia," September 11, 1946, FO 371/53526, UK National Archives.

19. There were discussions between Ethiopia and the United Kingdom regarding how to put pressure on the communities around Zeila so as to give the town and the port to Ethiopia: "It seems clear that . . . would make it more difficult than ever for us to put pressure on the Esa to hand over Zeila under any conditions." Letter from military governor's office, July 10, 1947, FO 371/53526, UK National Archives.

20. This is how the British governor, G. T. Fisher, described Ali: "Mohamoud Ahmed Ali is an official of high integrity, and he has great ideals. He was educated in Sudan, and from the first he has had very strong views on the desirability of uniting all Somalis under a single administration—for the present, British." Letter from G. T. Fisher, July 10, 1947, FO 371/63216, UK National Archives.

21. The Ethiopian regime was deeply worried about the effect of the SYL on Somali communities in Harar, Dire Dawa, and other areas of the Somali-inhabited regions that it used to rule. Letter from Alex Curle, November 24, 1947, FO 371/63216, UK National Archives.

22. Somalis in the United Kingdom formed a society based at no. 56 Lister Street, Kingston upon Hull, in northeast England. The petition was signed on July 22, 1946. Some of the key members of the society were from the British Somaliland protectorate. "Unified Administration of the Somali Peoples: Planning Papers," August 1943–June 1947, WO 230/96, UK National Archives.

23. Before the conference, the SYL CC sent a strongly worded letter to the four-powers council's foreign ministers (copied to the UN secretary-general) in which it reminded them of the promises made to the Somalis by the British during its offensive against the Italians: "We further have the honour to inform you that the British Government had particularly promised—by manifesto thrown from aeroplanes during the war operations in 1940/1—that Somalia would never return under Italian domination." Letter from Somali Youth League to four-powers council, July 18, 1947, FO 371/63216, UK National Archives.

24. The Treaty of Peace with Italy provided for the disposal of the former Italian colonies of Somalia, Eritrea, and Libya. How they were to be disposed of was to be determined by an agreement between the governments of the United Kingdom, United States, USSR, and France. The treaty also stipulated that if the four powers failed to agree, then they would refer the matter to the UN General Assembly for recommendation. The four powers set up a commission of investigation that would visit the countries and submit its findings. See United Nations, *Yearbook of the United Nations, 1948–49* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950).

25. All-Somali Conference on the Unification of Somalia, "Appendix," February 1947, in author's possession. The signatories included elders of all major Somali groups. One of the most extensive petitions was drafted by the leader of the Somali National Society, Mohamoud Jama Urdooh. Mohamoud Jama Urdooh, "Somali National League: Representing the Somali Peoples in British, French, Ethiopian, and Former Italian Territories," October 18, 1948, FO 1015/51, UK National Archives.

26. The SYL received support, including cash, from many Somalis. For example, "HQ SYL have received a letter from an Ogaden Sultan saying the Ogaden members were awaiting the [United Nations Organization] decision. Should the decision be in favour of Greater Somalia then the Ogaden would rise against the Ethiopians to join the Greater Somalia and they would expect help from the SYL. The writer enclosed Shs. 7,900/- for the National Fund." "Political Intelligence Report: Somalia," July 15, 1949, FO 371/73797, UK National Archives.

27. Court of Inquiry, "Disturbances That Began in Mogadishu on January 11, 1948," January 22, 1948, p. 2, FO 371/69417, UK National Archives.

28. Ibid., 3.

29. Letter from British consulate, November 24, 1950, FO 371/80887, UK National Archives. The Italians flew two pro-Italian leaders, Islao Mahadalla Mohamed and Mohamed Sheikh Osman, of the Conferenza to Lake Success, New York, where the UN was holding a meeting, to petition for handing Somalia over to Italy.

30. The heads of the commission delegations were Etienne Burns des Roziers (France), Artamy Feodorovitch Feodorov (USSR), Frank Edmond Stafford (United Kingdom), and John Ellrington Utter (United States).

31. "First Hearing in Italian Somaliland: Record of Hearing of Brigadier R. H. Smith," January 15, 1948, p. 4, FO 1015/28, UK National Archives.

32. Aden A. Osman, "Notes to Journalists," 1973, in author's possession.

33. Court of Inquiry, "Disturbances," 7.

34. On the evening before the demonstration, one of the Somali police chiefs, Abdi Jire, told Muro (who was visiting) that there might be trouble when the demonstration took place the next day. He instructed Muro that he should prepare the party's supporters to get guns from the police station in case the Italians used force against the petitioners. Muro, interview by the author.

35. All the Italians killed were men except for one woman and her two children who unwittingly drove down the main Mogadishu-Afgoi road and were caught in the path of the crowd.

36. Court of Inquiry, "Disturbances," 13.

37. "In the course of its tours, the Commission held 13 meetings at which 756 representatives were heard collectively or separately, and visited 26 villages, wells, etc., where 235 individuals were questioned, either separately or in groups." Four-Power Commission, *Report on Somalia*, vol. 2 (London, 1948), 110. Because of the events of January 11, 1948, the people of Mogadishu were not consulted. Ibid., 112.

38. Ibid.

39. Michael Mariano became one of the leading nationalists in the British Somaliland protectorate and later in the Somali Republic. Lewis Salool, who had a Somali father and an Indian mother, was "a native of British Somaliland and of a missionary Catholic family. Educated in Bombay where he graduated M.A., LL.B., practiced as a lawyer in Addis Ababa under Italian regime, later in British Somaliland. He came to Mogadishu in 1945 as Legal Advisor to SYL." "Personalities in Somalia," December 7, 1948, FO 1015/51, UK National Archives.

40. Mohamed Ladane, interview by the author, Arlington, VA, October 2001.

41. Four-Power Commission, *Report on Somalia*, 13.

42. Ibid., 14.

43. Ibid., 17.
44. Muro, interview by the author.
45. The SYL branch in Cardiff was led by Duale Mohammed in 1947. Letter from Scott-Fox, November 15, 1948, FO 1015/51, UK National Archives.
46. Muro, interview by the author.
47. Four-Power Commission, *Report on Somalia*, 2.
48. Ibid., 11.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., 115.
51. Ibid., 119.
52. "On September 15, 1948, the Four Powers informed the Secretary-General of the United Nations that they had been unable to reach an agreement regarding the disposal of the territories and that, in conformity with the terms of the Peace Treaty, they were referring the question to the United Nations in order that it might be examined during the Third Regular Session of the General Assembly." United Nations, *Yearbook of the United Nations, 1948–49*, 256.
53. Somalis inundated the world body with petitions. Among the petitioners was Mohamoud Jama Urdooh, the leader of the Somali National League in the British protectorate. See Urdooh, "Somali National League."
54. Those favoring were Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Cost Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Netherlands, Paraguay, Panama, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, and Venezuela.
55. "Political Intelligence Report: Somalia."
56. The British were already advising the Italians with regard to how to deal with the SYL. They called Abdullahi Issa a "terrorist." Letter from political officer, February 22, 1949, FO 1015/140, UK National Archives.
57. Ibid.
58. From here on, the Somalis who in 1941 had thought of the British as liberators changed their minds and saw Britain as protector of Italian interests.
59. "Political Intelligence Report: Somalia."
60. The recommendation was identical to the British-Italian agreement. United Nations, *Yearbook of the United Nations, 1948–49*. See also File A/C1/466 in the UN's book.
61. Muro, interview by the author; Osman, "Notes to Journalists." The Somali Republic rewarded the Haitian ambassador with its highest honors. The Soviets proposed another version similar to that dealing with Libya, "with the exception that independence be granted only after ten years, and that Ethiopia be substituted for Egypt as a member of the Advisory Council." The proposal was rejected. United Nations, *Yearbook of the United Nations, 1948–49*, 259.
62. The West was interested in retaining Italy as a member of their bloc; the Soviets hoped that Italian communists might win the forthcoming election, which would put Italy in the Soviet camp; and the Arabs were silenced by the resolution that assured Libyan independence. Somalia fell victim to this expedient coalition, and Italian return to the country for ten years was assured. The irony of the Soviet support for Italy is that the communists failed to win the elections, and the Soviets became one of the most critical voices against the Italian colonial administration in Somalia during the 1950s. Turkey and Iran were among the abstentions; being the West's client states they could not oppose the West.
63. Hussen met these Somali New Yorkers when he visited the UN in the mid-1950s. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, April 8, 2005.
64. Letter from British consulate in Mogadishu, August 30, 1950, FO 371/80887, UK National Archives. Abdullahi Issa had an account with Barclay's Bank, New York, where he received funds from the SYL.

65. As SYL envoy, Abdullahi Issa wrote a petition to the chairman of the Fourth Committee of the UN General Assembly in December 1952 from Cairo, Egypt. United Nations General Assembly, "Report of the Trusteeship Council: Letter from Mr. Abdillahi Issa, Representative of the Somali Youth League, to the Chairman of the Fourth Committee," December 30, 1952, A/C.4: 228, UN General Assembly records, University of Minnesota Libraries, Minneapolis.

66. The SYL's plight was noted by the famous Pan-Africanist George Padmore: "The Somali Youth League's demand for a unified Somalia under temporary United Nations Trusteeship as a first step towards self-government was unanimously endorsed by the Africans when the commission representing Great Britain, America, Soviet Union, and France, visited Mogadishu in 1948. The Somalis have no illusion that their legitimate right of self-determination will prevail over the imperialist claims and counter-claims of the Western Powers and they intend to continue the fight for their liberties against all obstacles." George Padmore, *Africa: Britain's Third Empire* (London: Denis Dobson, 1951), 242.

67. The denial of Somali wishes by Britain was only one of many acts by Britain that hobbled the Somali nation for decades, and some of today's crisis can be traced back to these colonial misdeeds.

68. It is interesting to read the British report of the events: "For some days now tension had been increasing in Somalia. SYL members were known to be listening intently to radio news of U.N.O. discussions, including the broadcast 'The Voice of America.' The remarks made in the U.N.O. Committee on the night of the 4th/5th October and heard here on the radio had increased the tension considerably, and at 0915hrs, I [Abdullahi Issa] was informed of rumours and reports from the C.I.D. [Criminal Investigation Department] to the effect that anti-Italian elements were likely, in the afternoon, to stage a procession. It was reported that they might ask for permission to hold it from the B.A.S. but, whether they received permission or not, proposed to hold it. Shortly afterwards it was reported that a telegram to all stations had been sent by S.Y.L. H.Q. telling their members to listen to the radio for interesting news. In view of the C.I.D. information already received this was thought likely to be a 'warning order' for co-ordinated action. Steps were taken to put public telephone lines to Afgoi, Villaggio and Merka out of order." "The Report of the Chief Administrator," October 5, 1949, FO 371/73796, UK National Archives. See also the SYL's petition, signed by many elders, to the administrator requesting permission to demonstrate against the UN decision, October 5, 1949, FO 371/73796, UK National Archives.

69. Letter from Abdullahi Issa to First Committee of UN General Assembly, October 13, 1949, p. 19, FO 371/73797, UK National Archives.

70. The SYL also sent a delegation to Ethiopia, led by Ladane, to solicit its support in fighting against Italian return. The envoy was hosted in a hotel in Harar. Ethiopia did not want to aid the Somalis lest that alienate UN members, since it was awaiting the UN resolution on Eritrea. Further, Somalis and the SYL did not know that Ethiopia tried to gain trusteeship domain over Somalia. The Ethiopians gave pictures of the emperor to Ladane and told him to take these to Mogadishu. The SYL was not amused and turned the photographs into folders used for office files. Ladane, interview by the author.

71. Muro, interview by the author.

72. Some of these remarks are gleaned from words Osman penned in 1973 in response to questions by journalists. In his written response, Osman is too modest to name himself as the individual who challenged his fellow party members not to fight the Italians. That Osman was such a central person was confirmed by Muro. Muro, interview by the author.

73. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: Seventh Session, Annex*, vol. 1, 1950, p. 82.

74. Letter from C. Pitt-Hardacre, May 16, 1950, FO 371/80886, UK National Archives. Another British officer reported, "I was amused by one of the heads of departments at Headquarters, who dined with me the other night, when he described himself as a 'Fascist—without war crimes' all in one word." Letter from British consulate, September 14, 1950, FO 371/80887, UK National Archives.

75. Letter from British embassy, June 23, 1950, FO 371/80887, UK National Archives.

76. Ibid.

77. Letter from SYL Central Committee to United Nations advisory council, September 4, 1950, p. 3, T/PET.11/14, UN Trusteeship Council records, University of Minnesota Libraries. Abdullahi Issa reiterated the same message two years later: "Almost all the officials of the new Italian Administration in our country were recruited from the permanent staff of the Ministry for Colonies. They include such well known figures as Signor Bernardelli, Wagoner, Lucehetti, Piras, Ducati, Soleri, Bedini, Olivieri, Shapron, Scanh, Bologne, Tomaselli, Girace, Puccuoni, Carnevali, Gentilucci, Pirone, and many others who previously ruled Somaliland as a fascist colony." United Nations General Assembly, "Report of the Trusteeship Council."

78. This is how Pankhurst characterized the Italian administration: "The new regime as it took up the task of governing the country . . . was manned by old colonials who had served in Ethiopia; for instance, the Secretary General of the new government was the Fascist Governor of Harar. . . . A ruthless persecution of members of the Somali Youth League . . . is underway. In the first forty-seven days after the British hand-over to the Italians more than three hundred Somali Youth League members had been thrown into prison. All senior police officers . . . and others employed by the British have been dismissed or imprisoned. . . . The trials are in secret, the courts being closed to the public." Pankhurst, "The Horn of Africa," 197.

79. On August 3, 1952, Italian carabinieri raided SYL headquarters and searched the residences of Abdullahi Issa and Sheikh Issa Mohamed, two senior CC members. Two days later, the administration told the party to vacate its headquarters by prematurely canceling its rental contract without any basis. The contract was signed in 1947.

80. A UN officer reported to a British colleague that the "Italians are doing everything they can to suppress or destroy any element which shows signs of being anti-Italian, particularly the Somali Youth League. In Baidoa particularly there is at present every sign of a reign of terror. It seems that the Residente is not taking any steps whatsoever to protect any person who is connected with SYL. In fact he appears to encourage the unruly elements to take direct action against such people." Letter from C. Pitt-Hardacre. When the SYL appealed to the trusteeship authorities to look into the abuses in Baidoa, Fornari delegated one of those the SYL accused, Bernardelli, to respond to the party's claims. The SYL letter to the advisory council describes the Baidoa affair: "While Italy has, in its administering authority here, promised to maintain peace and public security in Somalia (Art. 2 and 6 T.A.) and a rigid application of the law without racial and political discrimination, the Administrators likewise Bernardelli Copasso have, on resuming power, started to practice a 'divide and rule' policy by instigating the Somalis to kill each other at Baidoa, Bardera, and Lugh Ferrandi. They armed the Hisbia Dighil Mirrifle party against the League and other Somalis . . . and when the wanted and prearranged conflict occurred between the two parties, the Administering Authority intervened at the distance of hours . . . and only to imprison the exponents of the opposition. In this method it was allowed that shops and houses of the non-pro-Italians be sacked and destroyed and that even Somali administrative staff be imprisoned for giving shelter to the refugees. As a result of such organized persecution, based on 'kill your brother' in the interest of others, all members and sympathizers of the League have been forced to abandon in mass [*sic*] and [flee] from the Upper Juba province in which area they have lived for over a century in good harmony with their Somali brothers even if their political opinions differed. As proof of the political persecution

in which the [nationalist] Somalis have been designated victims, the attached list of persons exclusively of the League, imprisoned during the past months is more than sufficient . . . and no single arrest was made from the pro-Italians." Letter from SYL Central Committee to United Nations advisory council, September 4, 1950, pp. 3–5.

81. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, April 2001.

82. Letter from SYL Central Committee to United Nations advisory council, September 4, 1950, p. 3.

83. This doctor worked under the British, although he supported the Italian agenda. During the British days the doctor received through the post cash that he distributed to pro-Italians in Baidoa. When Hussen took charge of the post office he noticed that the doctor was receiving bulky letters. After delivering several similar letters to the doctor Hussen became suspicious and opened one only to find wads of cash. Hussen sent the money to SYL headquarters and reported to them its origin. When the doctor failed to receive the weekly cash he realized that Hussen was the culprit but made no fuss about it. Instead he must have told his colleagues in Mogadishu not to send the money through the post. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, October 2000.

84. Years later when Hussen became a senior public figure he was able to reward the policeman for his kindness.

85. The list of people in Kismayo and other settlements hunted down by the administration is too long to include here. Among those arrested in Kismayo were Sheikh Mohamed Mohamoud (a qadi), Hersi Khaire (a medical assistant), and Abdalla Aw Farah (a teacher). United Nations General Assembly, "Report of the Trusteeship Council." These three were not killed but were dismissed from their employment.

86. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 12th Session*, June 16–July 21, 1953, p. 61.

87. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: Eleventh Session, 415th Meeting*, June 9, 1952, p. 18.

88. SYL president Haji Mohamed Hussein was offered a scholarship to study in Egypt in 1950. League leaders were concerned about the effect of his departure and asked him to stay until the prisoners in Baidoa were freed and refugees from that city were resettled. They offered to go to the Egyptians and ask them to postpone the offer for a few months. Haji Mohamed rejected this offer and left the country. Many in the party suspected that Haji might have been bribed by those who wished the SYL ill. The fear was that if Haji Mohamed left, there would be a power struggle within the party that would facilitate its demise. Fortunately for the SYL, the vice president, Mohamed Sheikh Osman, took over the party's leadership until a new president, Haji Farah Ali Omer, was elected in 1952. Muro, interview by the author.

89. The SYL was not happy with the Egyptian envoy, Salahdiin Faddel, although he was supportive of the nationalist project, because he drank alcohol. The concern was that he would mix socially with the Italians and befriend them. This is how a British diplomat in Mogadishu described the relationship: "The U.N.O. people are very pleasant but I think the Italians have got the Egyptian delegate, who replaced Rustom, in their pocket; Castello also is a border line case. They may find the Philippines, Escudero, a harder case." Letter from British consul, Mogadishu, June 12, 1952, FO 371/80884, UK National Archives. The SYL requested that the Egyptian be transferred. His replacement, Kamel, would play a vital role in the rapprochement between the Italian administration and the party. Muro, interview by the author.

90. Once the West brought Italy into the fold and Italian communists failed to win the national elections, the Russians turned against the very administration that they had helped impose on Somalia. See, for example, United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: Eleventh Session, 416th Meeting*, June 10, 1952.

91. Zoppo noted the killing of a key member of his party in Mogadishu: "On 25 May, Territorial Councilor Osman Mohamed Hussein, one of the directors of my party . . . was stabbed to death as he was about to leave for New York to appear before you. It is with great sadness that I substitute for him today." United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 12th Session*, 58.

92. Ibid., 58–59.

93. Ibid., 60–61.

94. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, July 23, 2005.

95. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 9th Session, Annexes*, June 6–July 30, 1951, p. 17.

96. A municipal authority was established in Mogadishu in September 1950, and among the councilors was the first Somali woman to serve in such a political office. This woman was the president of the Somali Women's League. Letter from British consulate, September 14, 1950.

97. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: Eleventh Session, 416th Meeting*, 22. The SYL had five representatives and the pro-Italian parties had six on the territorial council. The territorial council, which was established March 1951, held its inaugural meeting on July 29, 1951, under the chairmanship of the Italian administrator, Fornari. This council favored regional (tribal) rather than political party representation. This arrangement would change in 1953. Two Somali vice presidents for the territorial council were elected by the councilors late in the summer of 1952.

98. Osman, "Notes to Journalists."

99. Muro, interview by the author.

100. Muro, interview by the author; Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, October 2002.

101. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 14th Session, Annexes*, 1954, item 4, p. 11.

102. Osman "Response"; United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 14th Session, Annexes*.

103. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 14th Session, 530th Meeting*, June 8, 1954.

104. Ibid., 30. The presumed tribal orientation of the rural population was what the Italians, including the administration, pinned their hopes on for empowering their allied parties and continuing their dominion in Somalia.

105. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 16th Session*, July 1955.

106. The Syrian representative on the council, Rafik Asha, posed the most critical questions pertaining to the trusteeship territory's progress toward independence. He was very supportive of the SYL and was considered an important Somali ally. He remained at the UN long after Somalia gained its independence, but the new Somali leadership never publicly acknowledged his services. He told Hussen when Hussen came to New York as an ambassador, "Shame on Somalis." Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, November 2001.

107. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 18th Session, 703rd Meeting*, June 1956, p. 11.

108. Ibid.

109. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 20th Session, 796th Meeting*, May 1957, pp. 9–10.

110. Aden Abdulle Osman said that the advisors were posted there to ensure that the ministers did not reject Italian ideas. Osman, "Response."

111. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 18th Session, 703rd Meeting*, 12.

112. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 19th Session, 783rd Meeting*, April 1957.

113. In a strange coincidence, the killer, who remained in prison, was put to death the night before Somalia become independent.

114. The British administration described Musa Samantar as one who "has always been strongly pro-Italian and in July 1948 sent a petition to the Four Powers asking for Italian Trusteeship." See "Personalities in Somalia."

115. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 22nd Session*, June–August 1958, p. 18.

116. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 20th Session, 796th Meeting*, 2.

117. For a discussion of social capital as it pertains to the Somali case, see Abdi Samatar, "Somali Reconstruction and Local Initiative: Amoud University," *World Development* 29, no. 4 (2001): 641–656.

118. Many elements in the religious leadership spoke publicly against romanization and dubbed it *la diin*, or "faithless."

119. Muro, interview. See also Aden Abdulle Osman, diary, May 1957.

120. The SYL secretary in Galkayo was a pamphleteer who castigated the colonial authority in his pamphlets.

121. Osman, diary, May 1957. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, May 12, 2005.

122. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 22nd Session*, 20.

123. Osman noted in his diary that many of those who proposed the motion were interested in prolonging their current tenure in the assembly. Osman, diary, May 1958.

124. Osman's concern was heightened when Zayat, an advisory council member, told him that if elections were not held in constituencies where only one party was registered, the election would not be considered democratic. Osman, diary, January 7, 1959.

125. Osman thought that the SYL's proposal of a three-day delay would make party supporters unhappy and might also seem like a gimmick to the advisory council. Osman, diary, January 11, 1959.

126. Osman, diary, January 14–20, 1958.

127. Osman, diary, February 15 and March 21, 1959.

128. A few other members of the party were also inclined to take advantage of their positions. For instance, some members of the CC proposed that CC colleagues who failed to win seats in parliament should be paid by the SYL. The proposal was defeated, and Osman noted in his diary, "It is strange that many members are so immature as to make such a proposition. They do not seem to understand that the Government is legally prohibited from distributing public money to particular political groups, including the governing party." Osman, diary, January 12, 1959.

129. The mayor recovered from his wounds.

130. Osman, diary, March, 6, 1959.

131. Osman, diary, April 27, 1959.

132. At the end of April, Osman concluded that Haji Musa was not intending to resign. Osman explains his thinking about Musa's strategy and the possible cost to the SYL of removing him from office: "Haji Musa is not willing to back off and his unreasonable behavior makes me think that he was not sincere when he offered to resign. He kept us waiting while he attempted to entrench himself. The man is so attached to the ministerial seat and to the post's amenities that he will not go voluntarily unless he is thrown out with *all of his weight*. If one asks why Haji Musa decided to suddenly reopen GSL/Benadiria party offices without consulting the

cabinet and SYL, a plausible answer is that the man is driven by an inflated ego which distorts his thinking. Since it was well-known that that GSL covertly and openly preaches 'Darodism' [tribalism], Haji Musa thought he could provoke a major political incident and instigate tension between Darod and Hawiye [genealogical groups]. He thought that by abruptly opening the offices of the two parties, the government and CC would reverse their action and all the Darods would be convinced of the problem [imagined tribalism in government] and he would emerge as the great defender. I think Haji Musa poorly calculated and no one is going to shut down the two parties' offices." Ibid. (emphasis added).

133. Ali Shiddo, Jama Gani, and Salaad Abdi visited Osman in his home with the suggestion that a committee of mediators should be formed. Osman listened but did not commit himself. He told them that the only choice was for Haji Musa to resign, but they could try to mediate if the minister was willing to heed their advice.

134. Crowds supporting the Greater Somali League assaulted cars on the Afgoi-Mogadishu road, and many were arrested.

135. The sequence of events is noted in Osman, diary, April–May 1959.

136. Osman, diary, May 9, 1959.

137. Osman noted that Haji Musa would be angry with him. But he did not mind the minister's wrath because his first loyalty was to the country and then to friends. Osman, diary, May 12, 1959.

138. Sheikh Mukhtar Mohamed Hussein, interview by the author, Mogadishu, June 2001. Sheikh Mukhtar, who later became Speaker of the national parliament, 1965–1969, and interim president of the country in 1969, contests HDMS's claim that the majority of the Upper Juba population always supported it. The election figures of 1959 and 1964 seem to back Sheikh Mukhtar.

139. Osman noted in his diary, "In a sense I am glad that our party has won in most districts, and this indicates that the results of the constituencies where the party was unopposed are legitimate. Nevertheless, I would have liked a stronger opposition." Osman, diary, March 1959.

140. Osman, diary, March 17–23, 1959.

141. Among the seven who voted for the congress were Ali Hersi Farah, Abdirazak H. Hussen, Mohamed Ossoble, Hussein Abdi Farmacio, Mohamoud Mohamed Kutubahor (also spelled Cutobahor), and Ahmed Mohamed Nur. Abstaining were Sheikh Mohamoud Mohamed Farah and Mohamed Haji Sabrie. Osman, diary, March 25, 1958.

142. Osman, diary, March 27, 1959.

143. Osman, diary, April 3, 1959.

144. The next day was Eid al-Fitir, the end of Ramadan, and Sheikh Ali Jimale invited Osman to his house. Osman described his encounter with the man he called friend: "In the meeting he spoke of two issues: (1) my resignation, which he considered inopportune. (2) However, I gather from what he said that he is part of the group who decided, outside the CC, to obstruct convening the party congress. In fact he told me that he knew in advance that certain quarters in the capital ([for example, the tribal politicians] Darod) were relying on the congress to seed discord in the party. . . . He criticized Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkee, who was the leader of the 'conspiracy of officer-deputies.' My friend sees the conspiracy of others but not his plots and those of his allies." Osman, diary, April 10, 1959.

145. Osman noted in his diary that some members, who wanted to curry favor with him, repeatedly said that they wanted him as prime minister, assuming that post to be more prestigious than the Speaker of the assembly. Osman, diary, May 19, 1959.

146. Osman, diary, May 22, 1959.

147. Osman, diary, June 4, 1959.

148. Osman, diary, June 9, 1959.

149. Osman, diary, June 16, 1959.

150. Osman refused to live in a government-provided house after he became Speaker of parliament. Instead he used his housing allowance to improve the quality of his own house. His rationale for doing this was that he did not want to get attached to the comforts of office. From early on, he was worried that many ministers and senior politicians might be unwilling to give up such comforts and therefore would do everything possible to stay in power. This was a perceptive insight, and Osman's fears came true in later years.

151. The inclusion of Haji Musa Boqor, whom the prime minister had recently fired, and his cousin, Haji Musa Samantar, whose seat in the assembly was a product of tribal favoritism, as signatories to the petition did not enhance the credibility of the critics.

152. Osman, diary, June 12, 1959.

153. Osman, diary, June 21, 1959.

154. Osman, diary, June 23, 1959.

155. The telegrams were sent the morning of June 26, 1959, and were received in New York on the afternoon on June 28. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records*, June 28, 1959, T/1473, UN Trusteeship Council records, University of Minnesota Libraries. Only thirteen critics signed the telegram to the UN.

156. Osman, diary, June 26, 1959.

157. Ibid. The assembly Speaker noted some of the sectarian and self-seeking people in the party: "Di Stefano told me that Abdirashid [Ali Sharmarkee] and Gabiou are on the move because they could not realize their dreams of becoming ministers, since they requested through a messenger to be nominated as deputy prime ministers. The thing is plausible, but certainly not everyone is moved by egotistic sentiments. Among those in good faith is Nur Hashi. Alas, while I cannot say the same thing about Mohamoud Ossoble Adde, who had the courage to tell me that if he is not included in the cabinet, his Murusade electors will be disappointed and consequently urged me to take steps to promote him. Abdullahi Issa and his clique, including the CC, behaved badly and endangered the image of the SYL. The critics are also too extreme in their actions." Ibid.

158. Osman lamented that Issa did not seem to care about the implications of these actions, which could be logically interpreted as reprisal against the critics.

159. Osman wrote that a number of SYL members of parliament use the secret ballot to vote against government motions. He calls those who do not have the courage and conviction to let the government know their position "snipers." He also speaks of the government's vindictiveness. Osman, diary, December 1959.

160. Osman, diary, July 5–8, 1959.

161. Osman, diary, July 9, 1959.

162. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 24th Session, 1022nd Meeting*, July 22, 1959.

163. The American representative at the meeting said, "In my view, Mr. [Abdirazak Haji] Hussen had presented his case with considerable skill. It would be unfortunate, in view of the petitioner's ability to serve his country, if obstacles were placed in his way as a result of his appearance before the Trusteeship Council." Ibid., 392.

164. Ibid., 390. This has been Hussen's lifelong belief.

165. Muro, interview by the author.

166. Osman, diary, January 12, 1959.

167. One of the main conditions for receiving a housing loan was that owners live in their houses for at least the first five years. Very few of the new owners heeded this restriction.

168. Abshir made a foreboding remark in his inaugural speech as the Somali commander of the police force. This was captured by Osman, who was present: "Today we celebrated . . . the

first anniversary of Somalization of the Somali police force which passed from Carabiniere Lt. Colonel Arnera to our Mohamed Abshir. It was a beautiful ceremony that moved our indifferent masses. Speeches were made by the PM and others. . . . Among other things, Mohamed Abshir said that the duty of the police is to be faithful to the government that the people have elected freely and democratically. Who knows if his statement was meant as a warning—that is, the police would obey only such a government and not one that attains power without being democratically elected, as certain people would not be averse to maintaining power against the will of the people." Osman, diary, December 20, 1959. There has been a lot of speculation that Osman was an important factor in the elevation of Abshir to the top police job. Recent information indicates that Osman was not involved. The question is, how did the nationalist Abshir become acceptable to the Italians? It is reported that an important member of parliament from El Bur, named El Mondo, was married to Abshir's aunt ("ina Musa Mataan"). His pro-Italian credentials were sufficient to reassure the Italians about Abshir's nationalist credentials, and the Italians did not block the competent Abshir's rise to the top post in the Somali police during the trusteeship. M. Korfa, interview by the author, Brighton, UK, June 6, 2005.

169. Osman, diary, December 21, 1959.

170. It has been reported that two men close to Abdullahi Issa, Ottavio and Ali Issa, made all the arrangements, such as purchasing the farm, planting it, and securing the quota. Ali Issa was a plantation owner. Osman, diary, December 1959.

171. Osman, diary, December 21, 1959.

172. For a powerful exploration of this transformation and its legacy in Africa, see Mahmood Mamdani, "Race and Ethnicity as Political Identities in the African Context," in *Keywords: Identity*, ed. Nadia Tazi (New York: Other Press, 2004), 1–24.

173. Mohamed Osman Omar, *The Scramble in the Horn of Africa: History of Somalia, 1827–1977* (Mogadishu: Somali Publications, 2001).

174. Urdooh, "Somali National League," 1–2.

175. Letter from Somali elders to secretary of colonies, August 17, 1946, FO 1015/132, UK National Archives. Appendix 4 of the letter is a declaration of the Somali leaders from the British protectorate addressed to His Majesty's government.

176. United Nations General Assembly, *Official Records: 11th Session, Fourth Committee, 642nd Meeting*, February 18, 1957, p. 464.

177. United Nations Trusteeship Council, *Official Records: 12th Session*, 60–61.

178. See Louis FitzGibbon, *The Betrayal of the Somalis* (London: Rex Collings, 1982); and Louis FitzGibbon, *The Evaded Duty* (London: Rex Collings, 1985).

179. Aden Abdulle Osman, the assembly leader in the SYL government, handed a petition from a protectorate delegation in Mogadishu to the visiting UN secretary-general Dag Hammarskjöld.

180. Ahmed Qumane, interview by the author, Djibouti, Africa, March 2006.

181. The administrator summoned the Speaker of the assembly to inform him that he was disturbed by the presence of Mohamoud Harbi and others in the conference. His concerns were shared by France, Ethiopia, and America. The British were not as anxious. Osman, diary, December 14, 1959.

182. Osman, diary, January 8, 1959.

183. Prime Minister's Office, "Constitutional Development in Africa: Situation in Somaliland Protectorate, Part 5," June 10, 1960, PREM 11/4085, UK National Archives.

184. Osman, diary, February 11, 1959.

185. Osman, diary, February 12, 1959.

186. Telegram from T. Pike to secretary for the colonies.

187. Telegram from Somaliland protectorate, September 4, 1956, PREM 11/2582, UK National Archives.

188. Ibid.

189. Osman, diary, September 25, 1959.

190. Other members of the party were SYL members of parliament Mohamed Gabiou, Nur Hashi Alas, and HDMS's Abdi Bulle.

191. Osman, diary, November 13–20, 1959.

192. Osman, diary, November 20, 1959.

193. Members of the Devil's Pact parties did not attend the dinner held in honor of the guests. They claimed that they had a prior engagement. Osman, diary, December 29, 1959.

194. "Somalia: Attitude of the Tribes towards a Possible Union with the Somaliland Protectorate," November 21, 1959, PREM 11/2582, UK National Archives. The British were concerned about not only Ethiopian reactions but also the effect that Somali independence might have on its East African possessions.

195. Letter from D. Hall to secretary of state for the colonies, April 1, 1960, p. 48, PREM 11/2893, UK National Archives.

196. Ibid.

197. Letter from secretary of state for the colonies to prime minister, February 12, 1959, PREM 11/2582, UK National Archives.

198. Mohamed H. Ibrahim Egal, the leading protectorate politician, went to Addis Ababa, met with the Ethiopian emperor, and asked him to transfer the Somali regions to the protectorate before independence. Here is how the British authorities reported the event: "We fear that the failure of Mohamed Egal's visit to Ethiopia, when he asked the Emperor to hand over the Haud to Somaliland, might lead to serious tension. It now looks as if the emperor, having read a lesson to the Somaliland delegation, is content to let things cool down. Mohamed Egal, on his return to Hargeisa, expressed the fear that the Ethiopians would invade Somaliland immediately after independence: he knows that we regard this as most unlikely, and the Somalis in Mogadishu, who appear to agree with us on this point, may have done something to calm his fears in the course of his recent visit there." "Horn of Africa: Constitutional Developments in the Somalilands," June 10, 1960, PREM 11/4085, UK National Archives.

199. Paolo Contini, *The Somali Republic: An Experiment in Legal Integration* (London: Frank Cass, 1969), 3.

200. A key person on this committee was Mohamed Sheikh Gabiou, the minister for the constitution.

201. Contini, *The Somali Republic*, 8.

202. Contini notes that, "in 1957, as a result of increased demands for self-government, a Legislative Council was established, consisting of eight official and ex-officio (British) and six unofficial (Somali) members; the latter were appointed by the Governor from a panel of candidates prepared by the Advisory Council. In March 1959, for the first time the unofficial members were elected rather than appointed; their number was increased to thirteen and that of the official and ex officio members to seventeen. In November of the same year the elected members were increased to thirty-three and the appointed members were reduced to three. After that, progress towards self-government proceeded even faster and the Somalization of the civil service was greatly accelerated. In February 1960, a new constitution was introduced. While no change was made in the composition of the Legislative Council, an Executive Council was established, consisting of three ex officio members and four unofficial members appointed by the Governor from among the elected members of the Legislative Council. It was provided that the Executive Council members 'shall be the principal instrument of policy' and its members

'shall be styled Ministers.' Elections for the new Legislative Council were held in February by Universal adult male suffrage." Ibid., 5–6.

203. Constitution of the Somali Republic, art. 88, 89.

204. Muro, interview by the author.

205. The major celebratory event in Hargeisa was held in Beerta Xoriyada (Freedom Garden). Osman jokingly remarked, "What garden?" since there were no flowers or cultivated plants, only naturally grown acacia. Osman, diary, June 1960.

206. Samatar, "Somali Reconstruction and Local Initiative."

5. The First Republic

1. Letter from Somaliland government, March 4, 1948, CO 537/3641, UK National Archives, Kew Gardens, UK. This report describes popular sentiment for unity in former British Somaliland.

2. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 166*, April 25, 1960, US National Archives, College Park, MD.

3. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 164*, April 23, 1960, US National Archives.

4. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 325*, May 13, 1960, US National Archives.

5. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 339*, May 20, 1960, US National Archives.

6. The poem, "Kana Siib Kana Saar," written in June 1960, was transcribed from an old tape recorded by Radio Hargeisa. This is a shortened version, and my translation is meant to capture the general meaning of the message rather than be a complete direct translation.

7. Ismail Nahar, who was a senior businessman from the North, reported that one day the Northern parliamentarians met in Afgoi and demanded that Egal inform them about what was going on and why he was not leading the charge on their behalf. Egal is reported to have been so upset that he left the meeting, and there ended the presumption that the Northern members formed a single constituency. Jama Abdillahi Qalib, interview by the author, Nairobi, June 28, 2004.

8. The post of president was provisional because the constitution of the country was not yet ratified by the population in 1961.

9. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, September 15, 2003.

10. This would be one of the last occasions when the party exercised discipline and its MPs respected the party's will.

11. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, October 9, 2001.

12. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 29*, August 15, 1960, US National Archives. According to the embassy, "This is a remarkable address and the embassy compares it very favorably to other African leaders. Osman is exceptionally mindful of the constitutional role of the President and tells the public to take responsibility." Ibid.

13. Article 70 of the Somali Constitution declares, "The President of the Republic shall be head of the State and represent the unity of the nation." Constitution of the Somali Republic, art. 70.

14. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 42*, September 6, 1960, US National Archives.

15. Ibid.

16. Paolo Contini, *The Somali Republic: An Experiment in Legal Integration* (London: Frank Cass, 1969), 8–11.

17. US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram 1605*, July 2, 1960, US National Archives.

18. Ali Said Arraleh, interview by the author, Nairobi, September 2003. See also Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, November 11, 2003.

19. Aden Abdulle Osman, diary, January 18, 1961. The American ambassador, Andrew Lynch, reported how the process worked: "The Prime Minister spoke in favor of the measure and moved that it be adopted by acclamation. Michael Mariano, speaking as a member of the opposition, agreed with the Prime Minister's motion, but another deputy rose and began raising various questions. The Assembly stirred uneasily, and then gradually all the deputies rose and applauded, thus passing the new Act of Union unanimously." US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 148*, January 24, 1962, US National Archives.

20. Arraleh, interview by the author.

21. Among the Northern political leaders who vigorously campaigned for the constitution were Sheikh Ali Ismail, Abdi Hassan Booni, Ahmed Haji Dualeh, and Ali Garad Jama.

22. Among such opinion makers were religious and traditional leaders. Particular Muslim leaders were not comfortable with some of the articles in the draft constitution and asked the president for changes. President Osman reported in his diary that they "want to amend art. 29 of the constitution taking out the words '. . . and to teach their religion' regarding the freedom of religion, because they do not want that the Christians have the chance to find converts among the Somalis. As it is evident they should understand that doing so as they claim, we should not expect to look for converts where other faiths prevail. They also demand the institution of 'moral police' to pursue objective stipulated in art. 50 of the same constitution. They demanded that the non-Muslim judges in the Judiciary be substituted or at least the President of the Supreme Court be a Muslim, in alternative create two positions of presidency: a Muslim judge to hear the Shari'a cases, and another to hear non-Shari'a cases. I told them that not only the judges, but all foreign experts will be substituted as soon as we do not need them, being natural that we cannot have full confidence in them, but for necessity we have to keep them as long as the sons of the Country are not ready to replace them." Osman, diary, June 15, 1961.

23. Osman, diary, January–June 21, 1961.

24. In early March, Mohamed Awale Liban, the president's chief of staff, informed the American embassy that a significant negative vote was likely in some areas. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 183*, March 13, 1961, US National Archives. Michael Mariano also noted that the government would win the referendum but that its margin would not be huge.

25. By endorsing the constitution the Somali people endorsed the Act of Union embedded in it, which read, "The state of Somaliland and the state of Somalia do hereby unite and shall forever remain united in a new, independent, democratic, unitary republic, the name of which shall be the Somali Republic." Constitution of the Somali Republic, art. 1.

26. Ironically, Sheikh Ali Jimale was one of the key elected officials in the trusteeship government who contributed ideas to the constitution and who in particular argued for the age of the president to be set at the very minimum at forty-five years. Egal also had an opportunity as the chief minister of the British protectorate to add or delete articles to the draft constitution when Northerners were asked to do so in the spring of 1960.

27. President Osman thought that the Katanga Group's political game was unfortunate, as noted in his diary. Osman, diary, July 1961.

28. Osman, diary, July 3, 1961.

29. Osman's nonvindictiveness in political matters is best captured by remarks he made to his opponent, Sheikh Ali Jimale, a few days before the presidential election: "Reception at Villa in honor of the anniversary of the independence and union. The invitees were not less than 2000. On the occasion I decided to talk to my friend and opponent Sheikh Ali Jimale. I told him that life often plays tricks like the one we are living, putting friends and brothers against

the other in competition for positions of responsibility. This difficult moment will pass soon and in a few days one of us will become the President of the Republic. If he succeeds, I will be willing to give him all my cooperation and I wish he did the same in case I prevail. He replied that it is difficult for persons, who had serious conflict, to cooperate. I answered him I did not see any serious conflict between us that cannot be overcome. Eventually we could meet later and talk about the matter. We did not reach any conclusion because other guests joined us." Osman, diary, July 4, 1961.

30. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 5*, July 10, 1961, US National Archives.

31. This indicates that Osman's group thought they had more votes than actually transpired. Apparently some deputies who promised to support Osman had no intention of doing so. This would be a feature of Somali parliamentary politics for decades to come.

32. Osman, diary, July 6, 1961.

33. Osman revealed his inner strength by telling the then minister of Interior on May 9, 1961, several weeks before the election, that trust is key to success in life: "We spoke at length about the subjects of trust and mistrust. I let him read quotations from a book, where it is said that in life those who are equipped with trust have more chances of success than those who do not have trust. In these excerpts Gandhi and his philosophy of Satyagraha are quoted. A believer in Satyagraha does not fear to trust his adversary even if he cheated him 20 times, . . . the essence of this faith [being] an unwavering trust in human nature. . . . I copied this quotation with intent to send them also to Sheikh Ali Jimale, but then I only showed him and let him read." Osman, diary, May 9, 1961.

34. Many local observers pointed to the incongruence between the popular endorsement of the constitution and the parliamentary vote over the presidency as evidence that the public and the politicians did not share the same ethos.

35. Osman, diary, July 7, 1961.

36. Sheikh Mukhtar Mohamed Hussein, interview by the author, Mogadishu, July 2001. Sheikh Mukhtar was a key member of parliament from the Upper Juba region who later became Speaker of parliament.

37. Osman, diary, July 16, 1961.

38. This is an important fact for those concerned with Somali political history, because Qalib was a Northerner who was in a position to influence the process. He did not suggest his fellow Northerner Mohamed Ibrahim Egal as a possible prime minister.

39. US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram*, July 17, 1961, US National Archives. The US ambassador at the time also notes that the prime minister suggested to the president that parliament should be dissolved and a new election called while General Hersi led a caretaker government.

40. Osman, diary, July 8, 1961.

41. Egal also complained about the "Darodization" of government, or the many Darods in government posts, and claimed that nearly all the senior officers in the North were from the Darod genealogical group. Later on, several key Northern MPs told the president that Egal's claims about the North's dissatisfaction with the government were inaccurate and that their constituencies had no major problems with the way public affairs were managed in the area. Osman, diary, July 19, 1961. The president asked Egal and Hussen to talk with Minister of Interior Hussen. But the president saw Hussen and asked him about the Darod domination of senior civil service positions in the North, which Egal had complained about. Minister Hussen responded that "to transfer the public officers there must be plausible reasons, as [by] transferring them for the reasons put forward by certain people, you satisfy them, but at the same time you make others unhappy. So you end up only strengthening tribalism. There must be a legitimate premise to transfer civil servants from their posts." Osman noted, "I find right Hussen's

reasoning, so I told him that anyway he, the prime minister, and Mohamed Ibrahim Egal must work together to create the premises to [solve the problem]." Osman, diary, August 24, 1961.

42. Osman, diary, July 13, 1961. Osman was so astounded by the irresponsibility of so many politicians that he compared the enterprise to a brothel, as everything was for sale and nothing was sacrosanct. He cherished the words of wisdom cabled a few days earlier by Naser Nahar, from Hargeisa: "Honesty is the best policy." Ibid. Osman's political character was described in the following manner: "He is unique in Somali politics as being the only man who has been able to a certain extent to rise above politics and maintain the respect of the people as a whole as the 'elder statesman' of the Somali Republic. Although by no means sacrosanct, he has managed to escape most of the criticism leveled against the Government by the opposition and thus claim to be a non-partisan figure." US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 221*, May 1, 1961, US National Archives.

43. Constitution of the Somali Republic, art. 69.

44. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, November 2002.

45. Osman, diary, July 16, 1961.

46. Osman, diary, July 25, 1961.

47. The president recorded his misgivings about the new cabinet in his diary: "Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] let me swallow bitter pills with the increase of the ministries and with the inclusion in the government of certain individuals . . . while he left out valid deputies. I do not know for fear of what. I am sorry this thing is not a credit for him and it is disappointing." Ibid.

48. Osman, diary, August 14, 1961.

49. The president's frustration with the opportunistic game of a significant number of MPs is best illustrated in an exchange he had with one of the key opposition leaders, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal. Egal asked the president to "avoid rushing through the premiership and the ministers." Osman replied, "I told him not to worry, because I will avoid the occurrence of changes in the composition of the government. At worst I will convene all 120 deputies in one room and ask them to name one candidate to the premiership without letting them out until we accomplish our task and will them to dismantle the blocs." Osman, diary, August 15, 1961.

50. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 33*, August 28, 1961, US National Archives. Ambassador Lynch noted that the prime minister's statement confirmed that he was "bowing to deputies who charged him with appointing Ministers and Undersecretaries for political reasons." Ibid.

51. The US embassy noted that such a sizable majority was the product of most MPs fearing that if they did not support the government, the president would dissolve parliament. Ibid. There is no evidence in the president's diary to substantiate this fear.

52. Osman, diary, October 27, 1960.

53. Several MPs met with President Osman and tried to impress on him the need for a salary increase as befitting their prestige.

54. Osman, diary, December 12, 1961.

55. Osman, diary, November 26, 1961.

56. Osman, diary, November 3, 1961.

57. Osman, diary, August 24, 1961.

58. Egal reiterated his commitment to the union shortly before the military regime collapse. Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, "An Open Letter to the Nation and Its Friends," undated, in the author's possession. The letter ends with these prophetic words: "It is with humble humility, but honest and sincere candor that I have put forward these proposals. I pray with all my heart that God may grant [coup leader] Mohamed Siyad Barre the wisdom to leave before it is too late."

59. The president reports in his diary that Sharmarkee told him that the minister of Defense relayed that the parliamentary group from the region met and talked about the matter. The

president then called Egal, who said the meeting took place but he had explained to the gathering that "they cannot look for the recovery of the prestige of the Isaak [genealogical group] only." Osman, diary, December 31, 1961.

60. Hussen, interview by the author, September 15, 2003.

61. The US embassy reported the event this way: "British Embassy believes rebels included 15 cadets recently returned from six months officer training in Military Academy but not commissioned, and several Sandhurst graduates who [are] chronically dissatisfied by General Daud[Hersi]'s refusal promote them more rapidly." US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram 252*, December 11, 1961, US National Archives.

62. Additional evidence is reported by a US embassy officer who visited the North in early 1962: "After lunch a call was paid on the District Commissioner, Hashi Abib, a young man in his early thirties, pleasant but obviously a tough administrator and well regarded by Hargeisa authorities. He said conditions in his District were very peaceful. . . . The District Commissioner said that although Berbera was the home town of Mohamed Ibrahim Egal he had not seen Egal in the city on his last visit to the North and that it was his impression Egal's influence had waned considerably. He felt the main reason for this was that Northerners were generally not satisfied with the results which had been obtained by their deputies in parliament and the apparent belief that more would be done with better representation in Mogadishu." US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 165*, March 29, 1962, US National Archives.

63. Osman, diary, December 16, 1961.

64. The import-export trade in Mogadishu was dominated by Arabs and Indians when Jirdeh Hussein moved to the new capital city. He told US embassy representatives that noncitizen merchants had a near monopoly on this trade and apparently did not like a new Somali businessman from the North intruding into their turf. Jirdeh imported sugar and rice and sold them to local merchants at a price slightly cheaper than what Arab and Indian importers charged. The latter reduced their prices below his and inundated the market, trying to drive him out of the market. Little did they know that he had sufficiently deep pockets as well as business acumen to outwit them. Once Jirdeh realized what his competitors were doing, he sent for more rice and sugar and continued to charge lower prices. The new shipments made it difficult for the Indians and Arabs to absorb their losses. Jirdeh made his mark and ultimately became the most respected businessman in Mogadishu and the country. Jirdeh Hussein, interview by the author, Mogadishu, April 19, 1990.

65. US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 165*.

66. Osman, diary, January 28, 1962.

67. Prime Minister Sharmarkee spoke to parliament the morning after the coup and reported that order was restored in Hargeisa. The president waited to speak to the nation until a senior government delegation dispatched to the region reported back. He grieved the loss of life but was adamant about the importance of maintaining the rule of law and the integrity of the democratic institutions: "My heart is saddened . . . both by the cutting off of the lives of the two young men who were killed, and by the fact that such a number of our country's young men have ruined their own brilliant future as honored servants of the fatherland. It is equally clear that these young men were led astray not only by ambition to obtain ranks they would have obtained with the passage of time, but also by subversive propaganda of certain parties which, believing democracy to be an indication of chaos and arbitrariness, have for a long time done nothing but stir up the people against the constitutional order, letting people think this was criticism, without, on the other hand, giving any idea of how they would act if they were in the place of men who now have responsible positions." US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 98*, December 11, 1961, US National Archives.

68. Osman, diary, January 6, 1962.

69. According to US embassy reports, many Northern MPs insisted on this, which led to a number of MPs coming to blows with one another: "Assembly President Jama Abdillahi Galib adjourned the parliament when it broke into pandemonium of shoe-throwing over a demand by Northern deputies that a proposed committee to investigate the abortive coup d'etat should consist exclusively of Northerners. Subsequently the Northern deputies have boycotted the Assembly, which is proceeding in relative calm to debate the national budget for 1962." US Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch 94*, December 15, 1961, US National Archives. The proposal fizzled and was abandoned by the advocates when they realized that a civil court would adjudicate the case.

70. The presumed Northern political leader Egal's only appearance pertaining to the case of the coup plotters was to have been the day after the court dismissed the case. Osman, diary, December 21, 1961.

71. The death sentence was mandatory under this code if the accused was found guilty of waging war against the state.

72. US Department of State, *Airgram A-216*, January 28, 1963, US National Archives. The embassy reported that, before the case came to court, the defense had told the UN legal advisor to the Somali government that "the defense lawyers will raise constitutional questions leading to an adjournment until a constitutional court rules on the issues raised." Ibid.

73. Osman, diary, March 7, 1963.

74. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, June 2001.

75. Osman, diary, March 8, 1963.

76. Presidency of the Council of Ministers, *Government Activities from Independence until Today (July 1, 1960–December 31, 1963)* (Mogadishu: Presidency of the Council of Ministers, 1964), 88. See also Abdi Samatar, *The State and Rural Transformation in Northern Somalia, 1884–1986* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

77. S. Healy, "The Principle of Self-Determination: Still Alive and Well," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 10, no. 1 (1981): 14–28.

78. Osman, diary, March and April 1962.

79. Ozay Mehmet, "Effectiveness of Foreign Aid: The Somali Case," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 9, no. 1 (1971): 31–47.

80. US Department of State, "National Intelligence Estimate: Probable Trends on the Horn of Africa" (June 21, 1960), in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958–1960*, vol. 14, *Africa*, ed. Harriet Dashiell Shwar and Stanley Shaloff (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1992), 190.

81. For a thoughtful analysis of some US strategy in the Horn at this time, see Jeffrey Lefebvre, "The United States, Ethiopia and the 1963 Somali-Soviet Arms Deal: Containment and the Balance of Power Dilemma in the Horn of Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 36, no. 4 (1998): 611–643.

82. Osman's anticommunist (USSR and China) feelings are exhibited in his diary; see Osman, diary, April 5, 1963.

83. Osman, diary, April 17, 1963. President Osman was equally concerned about the American strategy, noting in his diary on April 17, 1963, "With corroborating documents in hand [General Hersi] said that the Abyssinians are receiving 54 tanks from the USA, while experts from the same nation have come here to study how to help us militarily. They speak of giving us only a complement to the aid from Italy and Germany. . . . The occidental powers want to have 'their cake and eat it too.' They do not want us to get help from the east but they also are not inclined to satisfy our needs." Existing evidence indicates that, in the Cold War context, neither the American nor the USSR government could understand what nonalignment meant.

Somali governments during the first seven years of independence stayed true to the idea of neutrality, although that is not what the world powers wanted to hear.

84. Although the Somali cabinet submitted a motion to parliament that, if approved, would have severed diplomatic relations with Britain, the Somali president was more cautious about the political implication of this event for the republic. Osman, diary, March 15, 1963.

85. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, November 2004; Mohamed Abshir, interview by the author, Minneapolis, September 14, 2005.

86. Osman, diary, October 3, 1963.

87. Osman, diary, October 19, 1963.

88. Osman, diary, October 17, 1963.

89. The Speaker confirmed to the president that he signed the accord "upon [Sharmarkee's] insistence." Osman, diary, October 22, 1963.

90. Osman, diary, October 23, 1963.

91. The Somali police force, led by the able General Mohamed Abshir, was regarded as efficient, nonpartisan, and highly professional.

92. Since opposition parties did not contest in these districts, the SYL won all the seats without voting taking place.

93. Osman, diary, November 30, 1963.

94. Ibid.

95. Osman suggested that if there was going to be any redistribution of parliamentary seats, then some should go to the North.

96. Osman, diary, December 1 and 3, 1963.

97. Osman, diary, January 14, 1964.

98. While the president was critical of the shortcomings of the government and parliament, he also felt deeply proud of the system of governance in the country. Here is how he compared Somalia to other East African states: "Our Somalia seems to be an oasis of peace and rock steady stability. We owe this to the democratic regime, and I'd say, to the tribal equilibrium that does not allow one single ethnic group to dominate the country." Osman, diary, January 21, 1964. Regarding the rebellions in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, he wrote that "these grave happenings in all three of the East African territories . . . make[] the maturity of Somalis and the goodness of the parliamentary system, with all its weaknesses, shine." Osman, diary, January 25, 1964.

99. Osman, diary, January 31, 1964.

100. Osman, diary, March 30, 1964.

101. US Department of State, *Airgram A-513*, April 3, 1964, US National Archives.

102. Ibid.

103. Osman, diary, March 31, 1964.

104. Abdullahi Insaniyeh, interview by the author, Arlington, VA, October 2001.

6. The Second Republic

1. Yusuf Dhuhul, "The Dalka Days" (unpublished paper, 1996), 2–4. *Dalka* was an English-language monthly news magazine owned and edited by Yusuf Dhuhul. It was widely read by the educated class and was the news outlet most critical of the government at the time.

2. Aden Abdulle Osman, diary, January 28, 1964. Hussen confirmed that it was he who wrote the editorial. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, March 5, 2003.

3. Osman, diary, June 1, 1964.

4. Osman, diary, June 3, 1964.
5. Osman, diary, June 6, 1964.
6. President Osman had only one concern about Hussen's character. He thought that the new prime minister designate was hard on his opponents and sometimes vindictive, but these were relatively minor blemishes given his courage, tenacity, and commitment to good governance and democratic accountability.
7. It is quite clear from the president's consultation process that his only concern about the appointment was getting the most competent and honest person for the job and the country. It was apparent to him that he would alienate many parliamentarians who were more interested in business as usual.
8. Osman, diary, June 7, 1964.
9. John Drysdale restated his praise for the leadership of Hussen as "the best Prime Minister Somalia ever had." Postcard from Drysdale to Hussen, 1992, in the author's possession.
10. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, November 2001.
11. US Department of State, *Airgram A-223*, February 4, 1964, US National Archives, College Park, MD; US Department of State, *Outgoing Telegram*, March 26, 1963, US National Archives. See also US Department of State, *Airgram A-361*, January 25, 1964, US National Archives.
12. Osman, diary, April 17, 1964. He noted in the diary that Hussen could be the "anchor of salvation for Somalia." Ibid.
13. US Department of State, *Airgram A-365*, June 9, 1964, US National Archives.
14. "Somali Republic," *Africa Report*, November 1964, p. 6.
15. Osman, diary, June 11, 1964.
16. Osman confirmed Abdullahi Issa's stance in his diary. Osman, diary, June 13, 1964.
17. "[The] first cabinet caused consternation among the old guard, and excitement among young intellectuals. By Somali standards, it is highly unorthodox because the members were chosen without giving due weight to tribal and geographic balance. There was an effort to stress ability and education as criteria for holding office. Five members were from the north as against two northerners in the outgoing Sharmarke cabinet." "Somali Republic," 6.
18. Osman, diary, June 13, 1964.
19. Hussen, interview by the author, November 2001.
20. Abdullahi Issa formally agreed to take up the portfolio of the Ministry of Health and Labor on July 18, 1964.
21. Osman, diary, June 20, 1964.
22. The president was mindful of the purpose of these pressures, but he remained resolute. He acknowledged in his diary that many did not appreciate his stance: "It is strange that [few people know me well] . . . after so many years in public life, nobody, I say nobody, as far as it seems, believes that I would have the courage to ignore the decision of the majority party, leaving Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] on the sidelines and entrusting Abdirazak [Hussen] to form a new government. Truly, I cannot understand what the people believed was being risked, acting according to the beliefs of my conscience and why one does not remember that Abdirashid himself was chosen even though the majority of the deputies of the time were in favor . . . of Abdullahi Issa." Osman, diary, June 21, 1964.
23. Osman, diary, July 8–9, 1964.
24. US Department of State, *Airgram A-698*, June 27, 1964, US National Archives.
25. Prime Minister Hussen took nine and a half hours to read his government's program in parliament. US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram 12445*, July 16, 1964. The program was sixty-three pages long.
26. Osman, diary, July 5, 1964.

27. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, April 2001. The American embassy reported, "Voting close throughout tense hour roll-call, enlivened by 15 minute uproar over whether Ali Mohamed Hirave's yes-no vote was yes or no. Abdirazak [Hussen] calmed hubbub by recommending 'no' vote be allowed a minister who he said was conditioned by being yes man in previous government." US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram 33*, July 16, 1964, US National Archives.

28. According to the American embassy, "Only one non-SYL deputy broke party discipline, namely SNC, and voted for the government. Others in this party who did not support the party line abstained. Among these was Abdullahi Jirreh Duale, who personally informed Embassy he considered SNC decision vote against Abdirazak [Hussen] was mistake." US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram 33*.

29. Ibid.

30. The president noted in his diary, "I could have sent back the government to the parliament for a revote after the preparations of a 'motivated motion' as written in article 82, no. 2 of the Constitution that says 'The National Assembly shows its confidence or no confidence by means of a motivated motion and approves by a simple majority with a clear vote.' But I thought that this motion wouldn't have changed anything." Osman, diary, July 14, 1964.

31. Osman, diary, July 25, 1964.

32. On August 22, Osman was visited by a prominent Northern businessman who apparently supported his principled political stance. "The second visitor . . . was Haji Girde Hussen—rich businessman and someone I have known since a long time ago (1943), from the time I did business from Belet Weyne to the North—he wanted to come to congratulate me on my courageous decision and my firm hand in the last political elections to today. I thanked him and told him that my behavior is not dictated for effect, I did not have to wrestle with my conscience and therefore I was not worn out." Osman, diary, August 22, 1964.

33. Ibid.

34. Osman, diary, August 11, 1964.

35. US Department of State, *Airgram A-144*, September 5, 1964, US National Archives.

36. Osman, diary, August 27, 1964. Here is how Osman expressed his sentiments: "Ahmed Sh. Mohamed Absiyeh . . . told me about the usual unhappy representatives who are not sure about their future and fearing that I could dissolve the parliament and publicly announce new elections, once we are past the period of one year from the proclamation of the results of the last election, so they are trying to amend Article 53 of the Constitution, in which the president cannot dissolve the assembly during the first two years after the elections and during the last two years of the mandate of the same president of the republic. These same representatives, besides, have already started to gather signatures from members of the assembly to present their motion. . . . In the first case, depending on the unselfish worries of certain unworthy so-called representatives of the people, they should know that it is not a joke to dissolve the parliament, especially when within sixty days of dissolving it new elections will have to be announced, and I truly do not know why I have to make those men suffer and what or whose fault it is if they know what they have done out of fear of being 'fired.'" Ibid.

37. US Department of State, *Airgram A-198*, September 28, 1964, US National Archives.

38. A number of the diehards such as Sharmarkee had left the country a few days earlier, possibly recognizing that they could not stop the momentum in favor of Hussen.

39. Osman, diary, September 28, 1964. See also US Department of State, *Airgram A-198*. Sharmarkee, the former prime minister, did not come out openly in opposition to the new regime, and he went on a trip to Europe during the final vote, but he worked behind the scenes to convey his displeasure. Yusuf Egal, Sharmarkee's ally, invited the two men to dinner to help patch up their friendship. Hussen offered Sharmarkee, once again, whatever cabinet post he

desired. But the former prime minister was in no mood for niceties. Instead, he expressed his anger over some of the contents of Hussen's first public speech on Radio Mogadishu in which he associated, Sharmarkee claimed, the former regime with corrupt and clannish ways. Hussen contested this and asserted that his written and oral speech specifically promised to attempt to curb corruption. A second meeting was arranged between the two but made no progress in bridging the gulf. From then on, Hussen was firmly in the opposition. He rarely attended parliamentary sessions. He spent his days on Lido beach reading Italian novels and making rare appearances in parliament to cast a crucial vote. At Lido, he was visited by disgruntled MPs.

40. Hussen formed a commission headed by Ahmed Mohamed Silanyo to review all Soviet aid projects and look for ways to reduce their impact on the budget.

41. "Government's Duty to Serve the Community," *Somali News*, June 15, 1964, p. 1.

42. To ensure that his reform was something new and that the democratic process would be respected, the new government changed the rules, and opposition parties were now allowed to use the national radio. Here is how the American embassy reported the new milestone: "The new policy of allowing anti-government statements to be published in the government press and broadcast over government radio was initiated by the Prime Minister and his Minister of Information Yusuf Aden Boukah. Heretofore, political developments in the capital were largely obfuscated and often well garbled by the time they reached the country side via the grape vine. Within the capital uncertainty and the necessity to pass the news by word of mouth contributed to the incessant chatter in the coffee houses. All Embassy sources have been pleasantly shocked by this new departure in the treatment of domestic political news which reached the whole country simultaneously and viva voce. The refreshing frankness is apparent from the texts of all the statements and interviews which are enclosed as published in the August 14 Somali News." US Department of State, *Airgram A-112*, August 19, 1964, US National Archives. See also "Country's Interest Comes First," *Somali News*, August 14, 1964, p. 1.

43. According to the constitution, "A Minister or Under-Secretary, during his period in office, may not exercise any other public functions, except the electoral vote and the functions of deputy in the National Assembly, nor may he engage in professional, commercial, industrial or financial activities. He may not directly or indirectly lease or acquire property belonging to the State or to public bodies except for premises to be used as his personal residence. He may not, furthermore, alienate or lease his own property to the State or to public bodies, or participate in a personal capacity in State enterprises or in enterprises controlled by the State." Constitution of the Somali Republic, art. 80.

44. "Honest Government," *Somali News*, July 8, 1964, pp. 1–2.

45. Osman, diary, September 1, 1964.

46. Osman, dairy, December 27, 1964.

47. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, January 2002.

48. US Department of State, *Airgram A-572*, May 11, 1964, US National Archives.

49. US Department of State, *Airgram A-427*, January 30, 1965, US National Archives.

50. US Department of State, *Airgram A-432*, January 31, 1965, US National Archives; US Department of State, *Airgram A-439*, February 6, 1965, US National Archives.

51. US Department of State, *Airgram A-464*, February 13, 1965, US National Archives. Here is how the American embassy summed up Hussen's leadership: "The reform does not appear to have favored or spared any tribal segment of the population. The North may have gained a few positions owing to the better qualifications of its men. The army and other state organs may be next in line for reform. Abdirazak [Hussen] has demonstrated a high order of leadership in his effort to create a strong administrative framework for Somalia and he has a good chance to succeed in fending off eventual opposition moves in the Assembly." Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, December 2001. See also "Re-organization of Civil Service Underway: Abdirazak on 'Tremendous Task Ahead,'" *Somali News*, January 22, 1965, p. 1.

54. "Abdirazak Announces Reform," *Somali News*, January 29, 1965, p. 1.

55. There is plenty of evidence of a substantial number of Somali government officials, MPs, senior party figures, and senior civil servants reporting to the US embassy. For instance, senior officers from the Foreign Ministry reported to the embassy. See US Department of State, *Airgram A-57*, August 15, 1964, US National Archives, in which an American officer describes a young Somali officer's brief about dealings in the parliament regarding the vote of confidence. The Somali officer "apologized for not having visited me at home or especially in the Embassy for some time since, as he said, government employees are on notice not to call on foreign embassies unless it is strictly on business and that his 'sensitive work' has made him especially careful." More seriously, and according to an American embassy report, "Acting Police Commandant Korshel informed Embassy he believed Ethiopian attempt to recover arms distributed by ex-PriMin Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] government to nomads was one of the root causes of clashes in Ogaden, which were not concentrated in the border zones." US Department of State, *Airgram A-555*, March 29, 1965, US National Archives.

56. US Department of State, *Airgram A-464*.

57. US Department of State, *Airgram A-623*, May 10, 1965, US National Archives.

58. US Department of State, *Airgram A-627*, May 10, 1965, US National Archives. The president's diary for 1965 is missing.

59. US Department of State, *Airgram A-656*, May 24, 1965, US National Archives.

60. Ibid.

61. President Osman was deeply concerned about the long hours Hussen worked and his health: "Abdirazak Haji Hussen—Prime Minister—is in bed again with the flu. This evening around 9:00 p.m. I went to visit him at home, seeing that on the phone they said that he could not get up. This man asks of his body more than it can give." Osman, diary, February 2, 1966.

62. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, May 4, 2003.

63. US Department of State, *Airgram A-519*, March 6, 1965, US National Archives. There was no let up in the fight, and numerous cases were brought to court in 1965. In one case, again in Hargeisa, the government lost its witness, who fled to Ethiopia: "Abdulkadir Abdi Dualeh, Assistant District Commissioner at Gebile in 1964, teacher at the Hargeisa Trades School and sometime businessman, who was potentially a key witness in the Government's case against former Hargeisa Governor Said Abdillahi Warsama, Deputy Governor Abdi Aden Nur and several senior officials for alleged embezzlement of So.Shs. 1.5 million, escaped to Ethiopia November 15, 1965. Abdulkadir was arrested two months ago, charged with the maladministration of So.Shs. 100,000 relief funds provided by the Government for the needy after the 1964 Somali-Ethiopian border clash and released on So.Shs. 100,000 bail which was provided by leading businessmen Ahmed Haji Abdillahi 'Hashish' and Ali Wasama Wais, agent for Paul Reis in Hargeisa. Abdulkadir's hearing was scheduled for Monday November 15. He requested in court that day that he be permitted to retain an attorney. The Lower Court Somali Judge at Hargeisa commented that Abdulkadir had had two months to retain legal counsel, but agreed to postpone the hearing until next day, November 16. Abdulkadir failed to appear in court November 16 and his car was found by police later in the day at Salaleh, a village due south of Hargeisa near the Ethiopian border. . . . Honest local administration in Somalia will lose if these senior officials from Hargeisa are not tried and convicted." US Department of State, *Airgram A-186*, November 16, 1965, US National Archives.

64. Osman, diary, January 1, 1966.

65. Osman, diary, January 2, 1966. On the following day President Osman wrote the following about his prime minister: "Abdirazak H. Hussen is not so generous in pardoning those that he believes have done something wrong or have been an enemy. . . . Yesterday I asked him for the hundredth time to let it be—taking back the veto—about the question of the 'Rothman' cigarettes whose introduction in Somalia he had blocked because he believes they are South African, but he now seems to have blocked them only because [of] Haji Musa Boqor's interests. And so Abdirazak does not want to hear about it." Osman, diary, January 3, 1966.

66. After dinner the president walked alone to the prime minister's house, and Hussen then told him about his change of heart. Osman, diary, January 6, 1966.

67. Yusuf Dhuhul, "A Brave New Day," *Dalka* 1, no. 8 (1966): 10.

68. Osman, diary, August 1, 1966.

69. Osman, diary, January 26, 1964.

70. Osman, diary, April 5, 1963.

71. US Department of State, *Outgoing Telegram*, October 28, 1966, US National Archives.

72. US Department of State, *Airgram A-363*, April 2, 1966, US National Archives.

73. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, May 21, 2001.

74. This period was marked by a major conflict in Yemen between Egypt and Saudi Arabia, in which each supported different political factions.

75. Hussen, who saw the transcripts of the meeting, immediately recognized the brewing diplomatic storm and worried how the Egyptian would react. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, June 2001.

76. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, May 4, 2003.

77. Osman, diary, February 7, 1966.

78. US Department of State, *Airgram A-325*, March 5, 1966, US National Archives.

79. Osman, diary, February 27, 1966.

80. Osman, diary, March 4, 1966.

81. Ibid. Osman also hoped that "parliament will elect the man to take the responsibility of the President, who is intelligent and capable as well as culturally superior to the average of the men around in this assembly." Osman, diary, March 5, 1966.

82. Osman, diary, March 8, 1966. Although Osman was satisfied with the outcome of the election, he nevertheless noted that "Sh. Mukhtar is a gentleman capable of [carrying out the duties; however,] he does not speak foreign languages." Osman also wished that the new president was from the North. Ibid.

83. The American embassy noted that "Mohamed Egal, former leader of the SNC, and one of the leading political figures from British Somaliland in the early days of independence, resigned from the Somali National Congress (SNC) and joined the . . . ruling party. Abdurahman Abby Farah, Acting Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, [mistakenly] confirmed to an Embassy officer that Egal made the change at the personal request of President Aden [Osman]." US Department of State, *Airgram A-363*. Contrary to the embassy's understanding, Osman was amused by the switch, as he noted in his diary. The opportunistic nature of this move was not lost on the president because Egal had been involved in attempts to subvert government led by the SYL since its beginning. Osman, diary, March 27, 1966. Despite knowing the opportunistic nature of Egal's move, Osman congratulated Egal when he came to see Osman on April 5 and told him about his joining the SYL. Osman, diary, April 5, 1966.

84. Osman, diary, June 24, 1966.

85. Osman, dairy, June 26, 1966.

86. US Department of State, *Airgram A-37*, August 6, 1966, US National Archives. See also "Abdirazak Resigns," *Somali News*, June 27, 1966, p. 1.

87. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, May 11, 2002. See also US Department of State, *Airgram A-14*, July 16, 1966, US National Archives.

88. The US embassy reported that Sharmarkee was outflanked during this period and that "Hussen replied to criticism of his government's policies, immediately before the vote in a lengthy speech which castigated Sharmarkee for accepting Soviet Loan projects which has proved not to be economically feasible and whose local costs (So. Shs. 173 million) put an unbearable burden on any Somali Government; reported the USSR's unwillingness so far to provide financing for the increased local costs; [and] noted the trade and cultural ties as well as economic assistance." US Department of State, *Airgram A-14*.

89. The following day, Osman reported in his diary, "Received yesterday Sheikh Mukhtar—President of the National Assembly. I found out from him that the day before yesterday evening, the SYL has expulsed from the party about fifteen deputies who abstained from the recent confidence of the government. . . . I found out from Abdirazak, whom I called, that the number of expulsed were 13. . . . These were Haji Musa Boqor, Musa Samantar, Osman Mohamed Adde, Ismail Duale, Ahmed Allor, Awil Haji Abdullahi, Abdullahi Mohamed Gablan, Mohamed Ahmed Haji Salah, Yasin Nur Hassan, Ahmed Gure Mamun, Mohamed Abdi Gibril, Islao Osman Nur, and Ali Alio." Osman, diary, July 19, 1966.

90. US Department of State, *Airgram A-37*, July 6, 1966, US National Archives.

91. "According to a radio transmission from the English BBC from the night between the 28th and the 29th of the current month [June] that was heard in Mogadishu, and during the 45 minutes, 4 to 5 experts in Somali affairs interrogated by the British broadcasting depicted Somali democracy in a good light, claiming that the Somali republic enjoys immense prestige in the world and in the United Nations. The comments originated in the recent resignation of the government and my having sent them back to parliament for a vote of confidence, and I agree that our Somalia has by now remained the only country that has preserved liberal and parliamentary democracy, but as far as the prestige of the world, I don't count on it so much. If our country does get this prestige, it is also due to the fact that up until now we have been able to not 'sing' for anyone of the hegemonic powers, [and thereby] maintain friendly relations with each one of them!" Osman, diary, June 30, 1966.

92. US Department of State, *Airgram A-37*, August 6, 1966, US National Archives.

93. Osman, diary, July 8, 1966.

94. US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram 49*, November 29, 1966, US National Archives.

95. US Department of State, *Airgram A-174*, November 11, 1966, US National Archives. At the exchange rate of the time, 100,000 shillings was equivalent to about $15,000.

96. US Department of State, *Airgram A-379*, April 22, 1967, US National Archives. In this conversation, Egal told the American of his plans as prime minister: "Egal commented that he established a campaign office within the past week, with Nicolino Mohamed in charge. Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, Yassin Nur Hassan and he checked in once a day and compared notes on where they stood. If elections were held today (April 16) Abdirashid would receive 80 votes. . . . In response to my query, Egal said Yassin Nur Hassan would be Minister of Interior, Abdullahi Issa, Minister of defense, and between him [and Abdirashid, they] would retain Foreign Affair. . . . Egal said . . . some years ago he had visited Addis Ababa, though this was not known to many of his closest friends, and also had established a sound friendship with the former IEG [Imperial Ethiopian Government] Ambassador in Somalia. His hope for a positive settlement of the Ogaden problem would be the creation of a self-governing area in the Ogaden which would report to and be under the authority of IEG Ministry of Interior. He would also seek a complete elimination of customs duties, visa requirements and other obstacles to intimate relations with Ethiopia. He hopes Somali students could attend Ethiopian schools, Somali and

Ethiopia would work together on economic development projects and there would be free unhindered travel and communication between the two countries. Egal believed his contacts in Ethiopia are good enough that the IEG and HIM [His Imperial Majesty] would work with him to settle the Ogaden problem. We wonder if Egal's visit to Ethiopia coincides with the report given to President Aden [Osman] stating that a check was given to Egal by Ethiopia? In addition, the appointment of Nicolino confirms that the Abdirashid-Egal team had successfully recruited most of those civilian servants dismissed through Abdirazak[Hussen]'s reform program as well as protecting those ministers dismissed for corruption. Unfortunately Egal was oblivious to the fact that Ethiopia was providing little if any education for Somali Ethiopians." Ibid.

97. US Department of State, *Outgoing Telegram*, October 28, 1966, US National Archives.

98. US Department of State, *Airgram A-363*.

99. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, March 22, 2002.

100. US Department of State, *Airgram A-392*, April 17, 1966, US National Archives. Here is how the American embassy report describes it: "GSR [government of the Somali Republic] agrees to recognize North Korea at the close of [Democratic People's Republic of Korea] parliamentary visit. On the departure of the eight-man team North Korean Parliamentary Delegation April 13, 1967, after a four-day visit, the GSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs commented to an embassy officer that while the GSR has agreed in principle of establishing relations with DPRK, the GSR has no funds to open an Embassy in Pyong Yang, though the GSR would welcome a North Korean Embassy in Mogadishu. The North Koreans were invited to visit Somalia by the National Assembly President Shiek Mukhtar during the visit of the Somali Parliamentarians to Pyong Yang in October 1966." Ibid.

101. René Lemarchand, "The CIA in Africa: How Central? How Intelligent?" in *Dirty Work 2: The CIA in Africa*, ed. Ellen Ray, William Schaap, Karl Van Meter, and Louis Wolf (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1979), 16.

102. US Department of State, *Airgram A-206*, December 11, 1966, US National Archives. The embassy reporting officer concluded his report with, "It should be noted that the propaganda coming from Radio Addis has been especially slanderous and vicious during the prime Minister's visit. It not only accused him and his ministers of being corrupt, inefficient, unclean and bloody-handed, but went so far as to urge the people to violence to rid themselves of these men." Ibid. See also Somali Republic, *The Prime Minister's Tour of All Regions of the Somali Republic from 28th November to 17th December, 1966* (Mogadishu: Government Printing Press, 1966).

103. US Department of State, *Airgram A-208*, December 20, 1966, US National Archives.

104. Osman, diary, January 4, 1967.

105. Osman, diary, May 25, 1967.

106. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, April 2002.

107. At this stage Osman appears to have assumed that he would be nominated and that he would run. He noted in his diary as the SYL congress entered its last day, "Once I am accepted to compete, I like to 'not bite the dust' but I certainly won't be desperate, as I believe my adversary will be if he loses the race!" Osman, diary, May 31, 1967.

108. The two candidates were separately interviewed by *La Tribune*, an Italian-language Somali newspaper, and Osman took his famous stand that he was not going to beg or pay people to vote for him. US Department of State, *Airgram A-437*, May 27, 1967, US National Archives.

109. Awil Haji Abdillahi (Anthony James) visited President Osman and urged him to appoint a Northerner as prime minister to win the votes of MPs from that region. Here is how Osman represented the conversation: "Received the Hon. Awil Haji Abdullahi, alias Anthony James, ex-Finance Minister from the government of Abdirazak [Hussen]. The Somaliland

residents, according to him, want the post of Prime Minister after the upcoming election of head of state, and thus they will support whoever assures them that post. He added that it is said that I am not disposed towards satisfying them in that sense. I told him that everything will be discussed at the proper time but that in any case it is not my character to 'bargain' about questions of this type, and so much the less now since really I just want to free myself from this responsibility, if I am allowed to do what I desire most to do." Osman, diary, April 3, 1967.

110. US Department of State, *Airgram A-423*, May 8, 1967, US National Archives.

111. Zoppo, the minister of Interior, was a key player in maintaining some of the MPs. On one occasion he made the mistake of offering money to one of Osman's loyal supporters. Osman found out about this after the election. "The other day Zoppo had told me that Abdi Bulle had refused to take 10 or 15 thousand Shillings that he wanted to give him for the election! They should raise a monument to Abdi Bille!" Osman, diary, June 20, 1967.

112. Osman, diary, March 6, 1967.

113. Even many genuine supporters did not appreciate the depth of Osman's convictions. Consequently three types of people visited him in the months preceding the election. The first group was parliamentarians and other notables who urged him to run and who genuinely felt that he was the best man for the country. Some nonparliamentarians offered their own money to him to cover the costs of this endeavor. The second group was parliamentarians who preferred Osman for the presidency but who wanted him to promise that a Northerner would be the future prime minister or other favors. The final set was a smaller group who simply did not care about the issues and the nation's interest but who tried to play the money game.

114. Osman, diary, January 3, 1967.

115. Osman, diary, February 2, 1967.

116. Hussen's sister was married to this MP's father.

117. Osman, diary, June 10, 1967.

118. "The most significant aspect of the shuffle seems to be the elimination of 'Juju' [Juujo] about which there are a welter of theories of varying degree of credibility. The most plausible and widely-accepted explanation is that having switched from the Aden Abdulle [Osman] to Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] camp at the last moment during the presidential campaign in 1967, 'Juju' was not a man whose loyalty could be counted on." US Department of State, *Airgram A-267*, March 4, 1968, US National Archives.

119. Osman reported the following regarding Isaak: "Hussen Culmie told me that three deputies who are on our side (one who is a minister) have rented living quarters in Afgoi and have said that they won't come to the voting. They are Aden Isak, Sheik Yusuf Sh. Osman, and Ahmed Mohamed Obsie. I have also been informed that the three deputies have entrenched themselves in the Shabelle Hotel, but that they were flushed out and brought to the assembly." Osman, diary, June 10, 1967.

120. Ibid.

121. Osman remembered Sharmarkee's unbecoming behavior after he was not reappointed as prime minister in 1964, when Sharmarkee attempted to disrupt the transition and automatically became an opposition member. He also recalled how Sharmarkee tried every trick in the book to undermine the government's work to boost his electoral chances and without regard to the national interest. Osman, diary, June 11, 1967.

122. Ibid.

123. Ali Said Arraleh was one of the first directors general from the North and remained in the position until in the late 1980s.

124. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, May 12, 2002.

125. Abdi Samatar and Ahmed Samatar, "Somalis as Africa's First Democrats: Premier Abdirazak H. Hussein, and President Aden A. Osman," *Bildhaan: International Journal of Somali Studies* 2 (2008): 1–64.

7. The March toward Dictatorship, 1967–1974

1. E. A. Bayne, *Four Ways of Politics: State and Nation in Italy, Somalia, Israel, and Iran* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, 1965), 114.
2. Aden Abdulle Osman, diary, June 30, 1967.
3. Osman, diary, June 17, 1976.
4. Osman, diary, June 21, 1967. According to the US embassy, "On June 13, the Ambassador called on Abdirashid [Sharmarkee] to congratulate him on his election victory. At that time, in Egal's presence, the President-elect confirmed that the Northern Deputy would be his Prime Minister. In his talk with the Ambassador Abdirashid took pains to emphasize friendship to the United States and the West." US Department of State, *Airgram A-477*, June 22, 1967, US National Archives, College Park, MD.
5. Osman, diary, July 2, 1967.
6. Osman, diary, July 5, 1967.
7. Osman, diary, July 6, 1967.
8. Osman, diary, July 8, 1967.
9. Osman, diary, July 9, 1967.
10. Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, *Statement of Programme on the Occasion of the Presentation of the New Cabinet* (Mogadishu: Government Printing Press, 1967).
11. There is a difference between Osman's record of the vote and Hussen's count. Osman noted in his diary in August 1967 that two people voted against Egal's government, while Hussen points out that he was the lone voice of opposition. Here is how he recounted the event. "Sh. Ali Jimaleh came to me before the vote and asked to vote yes to demonstrate that Somalis were unanimous. I told him that I had serious reservation about the program and that I will vote my conscience. When the vote was called I stood alone and declared that Allah is *waaxid* and I am *waaxid* [Allah is one, and I am alone]. On that night I attended a reception in the German Embassy in which Egal was present. The German Ambassador gave me a hearty handshake and said my vote was a dignified one." Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, September 2002.
12. Osman, diary, July 29, 1967 (emphasis added).
13. Osman, diary, August 16, 1967. Whatever the truth about the former Foreign Affairs minister, circumstantial evidence indicates that a senior member of the new regime was also involved in a financial transaction with the Ethiopian government before he became a senior leader in the new government.
14. Osman, diary, July 20, 1967.
15. Yusuf Dhuhul, "The Dalka Days" (unpublished paper, 1996).
16. "Somali Republic," *Africa Report*, November 1964, p. 6.
17. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, May 11, 2002.
18. Ibid.
19. Osman, diary, June 25, 1967.
20. Ismail Duale Warsame, who was fired for corruption by Hussen, was rehired as a minister in the Egal government in 1969. US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram*, April 14, 1969, US National Archives.

21. Osman, diary, June 26, 1967.
22. Hussen, interview by the author, May 11, 2002.
23. This man was nicknamed "Stalin" because of his resemblance to the Soviet leader, including the famous moustache.
24. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, March 5, 2003.
25. Hussen knew of a check cashed in Egal's name in Aden (Yemen) in 1963 that General Hersi reported. In addition, it was already known that Egal took over 300,000 shillings from the Somali Central Bank shortly after he became prime minister. Ali Said Arraleh, the long-serving director general of several ministries told me that one of Egal's weaknesses was his use of public money as private cash. Ali Said Arraleh, interview by the author, Nairobi, July 2001.
26. Ibid.
27. Hussen, interview by the author, September 2002.
28. They rented an entire building and leased parts to businesses. The revenue paid the rent for the building and a fraction of the costs of running the party.
29. "Only eight of the 101 SYL deputies are known to have resigned to join forces in the DAP." US Department of State, *Airgram A-432*, October 23, 1968, US National Archives.
30. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, June 2002.
31. Ali Said Arraleh, interview by the author, Nairobi, August 2003.
32. US Department of State, *Airgram A-117*, August 13, 1969, US National Archives.
33. US Department of State, *Airgram A-339*, June 5, 1968, US National Archives.
34. Another part of the regime's strategy meant bringing the national police under the immediate and direct authority of the minister of Interior. "The culmination of several actions limiting the autonomy of the police commandant included the hurried enactment by the GSR of a decree law on February 8 effectively transferring from the Commandant to the Minister of Interior the power to assign, transfer, and presumably promote all lower officials." US Department of State, *Airgram A-27*, February 12, 1969, US National Archives.
35. Mohamed Abshir, interview by the author, Minneapolis, September 14, 2005.
36. Jama Mohamed Qalib, interview by the author, Nairobi, June 2006. Jama was the commander of the police in Hargeisa.
37. Zoppo told the American embassy that he knew of no intervention by Abshir or the police to support a partisan political project. US Department of State, "Memorandum of Conversation with Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden 'Zoppo,'" *Airgram A-33*, February 21, 1969, US National Archives. Governors were the leading authority in their regions and represented the central government in directing government affairs there.
38. Abshir, interview by the author.
39. Abshir was deeply offended by the meaning of his letter being twisted and the minister not even using his title of general in the letter.
40. US Department of State, *Airgram A-55*, April 9, 1969, US National Archives; US Department of State, *Airgram A-177*, August 13, 1969, US National Archives.
41. For the main points of the communiqué, see "Détente in the Horn of Africa," *Africa Report*, February 1969. It is understandable that the initial meeting did not deal with the core issues between the two countries, but there was no sign that Ethiopia was willing to find a permanent resolution to the Somali Region. From the communiqué, it appears that all concessions were coming from the Somali side. Had Egal and his colleagues consulted with former president Osman about his many meetings and negotiations with the Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie, they would have understood how far apart the two parties were. Former president Osman was initially pleased with Egal's bold approach to the issue despite knowing the emperor's deceptive and cunning ways. Haile Selassie invited Egal to Addis Ababa September 1–5, 1968. The following are the main points of the communiqués of September 5, 1968.

- Both governments reaffirmed previous undertakings to remove all causes of tension and undertook not to engage in subversive activities against each other.
- The two governments agreed to give overflight rights and to reach a formal agreement to this end soon. In the meantime, the imperial Ethiopian government permitted Somali Airlines to use the existing international routes.
- In conviction that the suspension of the emergency regulations would contribute to the strengthening of good-neighborly relations between the two countries, the imperial Ethiopian government agreed to suspend existing emergency regulations along its border with Somalia as of September 16, 1968.
- The two governments finalized the settlement of public and private property claims submitted by both sides. The exchange of property would occur at Tug Wajale on September 25, 1968.
- The imperial Ethiopian government submitted a draft cultural treaty to be studied by the competent authorities in Somalia prior to its signature in the near future. The two governments agreed to open negotiations over establishment of a telecommunications agreement. The two governments agreed to conclude a trade agreement. In the meantime, traditional trade between the two countries in the border areas will continue.
- The two governments reaffirmed the usefulness of the special joint commissions set up by the two governments in Mogadishu in February 1968. They further agreed to establish a Joint Ministerial Consultative Committee, which would meet periodically to discuss major and minor problems between the two countries and submit recommendations to their respective governments.
- Both sides expressed their satisfaction at the progress achieved so far in the improvement of relations between the two countries.
- The two sides emphasized that these talks are of an exploratory nature aimed at the eventual settlement of major issues.
- The prime minister and members of the Somali delegation expressed their gratitude to the emperor, the government, and the people of Ethiopia for their warm welcome and generous hospitality during the Somalis' stay in Addis Ababa.

Ibid.

42. US Department of State, *Airgram A-213*, January 11, 1968, US National Archives.
43. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, October 2002.
44. The three men were all short, plump, and very dark in complexion.
45. US Department of State, *Airgram A-396*, August 28, 1968, US National Archives. See also US Department of State, *Airgram A-420*, October 23, 1968, US National Archives. This report refers to Sharmarkee loading the civil service with his friends and relatives.
46. US Department of State, *Airgram A-11*, January 15, 1969, US National Archives.
47. US Department of State, *Airgram A-339*.
48. US Department of State, *Airgram A-15*, January 29, 1969, US National Archives.
49. Abdulkadir Zoppo, interview by the author, Djibouti, December 1999. See also US Department of State, *Research Memorandum RAF-10*, July 8, 1969, US National Archives.
50. US Department of State, *Airgram A-32*, February 26, 1969, US National Archives.
51. Hussen, interview by the author, May 11, 2002.
52. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Mogadishu, April 2003.
53. US Department of State, *Airgram A-108*, July 16, 1969, US National Archives.
54. US Department of State, *Airgram A-85*, June 4, 1969, US National Archives.
55. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, March 22, 2002.
56. US Department of State, *Research Memorandum RAF-10*.

57. By May 1969, a little over a month after the election, the SYL commanded 121 out of the 124 seats in parliament. See US Department of State, *Airgram A-72*, May 7, 1969, US National Archives.

58. Constitution of the Somali Republic, art. 58.

59. Hussen, interview by the author, May 11, 2002.

60. Hashi Abib was the cabinet secretary during Egal's tenure and retained that post for a period after the military coup. Hashi Abib, interview by the author, Ottawa, October 1996.

61. Robert Patman, *The Soviet Union in the Horn of Africa: Diplomacy of Intervention and Disengagement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

62. The policeman was tortured by the authorities to find out who else was behind the assassination. But he remained adamant that he had acted alone and because of his community's grievances regarding the stealing of a parliamentary seat by the SYL in the northeast of the country. The killer was taken to the National Security Court after the military coup, where he showed his genitals to the court to display the severity of his torture. He remained adamant that he acted alone and was sentenced to death.

63. Assayda is the white dress grieving widows don for several months after the death of their husband.

64. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, October 9, 2001.

65. The estimated date of the poem's first narration is early 1970.

66. Later when they were in prison in Afgoi, Hussen learned from Egal's defense minister, Hilowle Macalin, that "the night before the coup, [Hilowle] received a phone call in which the caller told him that the military were planning a coup. Hilowle asked the caller who he was, but the caller hung up. Hilowle got exercised and left his office to report to Egal and Yassin. On the way he met Colonel Salaad Gabeyreh and said that he wanted to talk with him. He asked his driver to drive Salaad's vehicle while the two talked in his vehicle on the way to the prime minister's office. Hilowle told Salaad that he had heard they were planning to stage a coup and asked if that was the case. With apparent sincerity Salaad protested that the national army could never do such a hideous thing just when the president had been murdered. Hilowle believed him and forgot about seeing the prime minister." Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, April 2002.

67. It appears that everyone underestimated Barre and the possibility of a coup. "[Barre] himself is not at all coup-minded and views his role as a kind of a safety valve on top of the hotheads in the lower ranks." US Department of State, *Airgram A-15*.

68. Hussen, interview by the author, April 2002.

69. It was later reported that the reason behind the accusation of Qorshel was not so much that he was planning a coup but that the regime found reports he wrote to Egal concerning the possibility of a military coup. These reports were discovered in Egal's office, and it is said that Barre took this as a personal attack, although in retrospect Qorshel was proved right by the events. Hussen, interview by the author, October 2002.

70. Abu Sitah was a wealthy merchant who, according to information he shared with Hussen, deeply regretted joining in the last parliamentary election. He told Hussen that he committed a sin by becoming a politician and that he regretted his decision and prayed to Allah to forgive him. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, June 2003.

71. In 1991 Badmah told Hussen that he had been sent by the national security chief, Ahmed Suliman Dafly.

72. Abdirazak H. Hussen, interview by the author, Minneapolis, August 29, 2001.

73. Hussen, interview by the author, April 2002.

74. Ibid.

75. Abdirazak H. Hussen, "Re-opening Debate on the So-Called French Somaliland at the 30th UN General Assembly" (letter to Somali Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs), September 19, 1975, in the author's possession.

76. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth: A Handbook for the Black Revolution That Is Changing the Shape of the World* (New York: Grove, 1968), 177.

77. Osman, diary, July 29, 1967.

8. Conclusion

1. US Department of State, *Research Memorandum RAF-10*, July 8, 1969, US National Archives, College Park, MD.

2. Yusuf Dhuhul, "The Dalka Days" (unpublished paper, 1996), 2–4.

3. Aden Abdulle Osman, diary, July 29, 1967.

4. Abdi Samatar, "The Destruction of State and Society: Beyond the Tribal Convention," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30, no. 4 (1992): 625–641. See also Ahmed Samatar, "The Curse of Allah: Civic Disembowelment and the Collapse of the State in Somalia," in *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal?* ed. Ahmed Samatar (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 95–146.

5. Roger Southall, Neo Simutanyi, and John Daniel, "Former Presidents in African Politics," in *Legacies of Power: Leadership Change and Former Presidents in African Politics*, ed. Roger Southall and Henning Melber (Cape Town, South Africa: Human Sciences Research Council, 2006), 1–25.

6. Wole Soyinka, "A Dance in the Forests," in *Five Plays* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 39.

7. Ironically, while journalists, political pundits, diplomats, and many academics continue to push the political centrality of clan identity in rebuilding the Somali state, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is categorical about the destructive and dysfunctional role of ethnic politics in restoring a democratic and effective Somali government. See AMISOM, "Transition Government of Somalia: Likely to Fall," July 2009, African Union Center, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

8. Abdi Samatar, "Africa's Merchants of Misery" (unpublished manuscript). Among those who peddled this narrative are I. M. Lewis, ed., "A Study of Political Decentralized Structures for Somalia: A Menu of Options" (unpublished report, London School of Economics and Political Science, 1995); Mary Harper, *Getting Somalia Wrong: Faith, War, and Hope in a Shattered State* (London: Zed Books, 2012); Mark Bradbury, *Becoming Somaliland* (Oxford: James Currey, 2008); Patrick Gilkes, *Acceptance Not Recognition: The Republic of Somaliland, 1993–1995* (London: Save the Children Fund, 1995); International Crisis Group, "Somaliland: Democratisation and Its Discontents" (ICG Africa Report No. 66, July 28, 2003); International Crisis Group, "Somaliland: Time for African Union Leadership" (ICG Africa Report No. 110, May 23, 2006); Samuel M. Makinda, "Politics and Clan Rivalry in Somalia," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 26, no. 1 (1991): 111–126; Ken Menkhaus, "If Mayors Ruled Somalia: Beyond the State-Building Impasse," Nordic Africa Institute Policy Note 2, 2014; and Martin Murphy, *Somalia: The New Barbary? Piracy and Islam in the Horn of Africa* (London: Hurst, 2011).

9. US Department of State, *Incoming Telegram 43*, December 31, 1965, US National Archives. For a discussion of the notion of the Somali nation in search of state, see Said Sheikh Samatar and David Laitin, *Somalia: A Nation in Search of a State* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1987).

10. US Department of State, *Research Memorandum RAF-10*.

11. Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968). See also Ngugi wa Thiongo, *Devil on the Cross* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1987).

12. John Lonsdale, "Africa's Past in Africa's Future," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 23, no. 1 (1989): 126–146.

13. The exception here is Nelson Mandela, who during the first free and fair elections in South Africa in 1994 was not eager to see his African National Congress win two-thirds majority, lest that frighten the whites and embolden the right wing.

14. Ali Said Arraleh, interview by the author, Nairobi, 2003.

15. C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 174.

16. Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

17. Timothy J. Power and Mark Gasiorowski, "Institutional Design and Democratic Consolidation in the Third World," *Comparative Political Studies* 30, no. 2 (1997): 123–155; Andreas Schedler, "What Is Democratic Consolidation?" *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 2 (1998): 91–107.

18. Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), 135.

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