

tables; 10,000 for fodder, and the same for sunflowers; and 400,000 lie fallow. The immense area stretches 300 kilometers south to north and 100 km east to west, an area estimated to be twice that of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

There is also a significant amount of livestock on the Scheme. Sudan as a whole has 1.7 million sheep, 1.6 million goats, 700,000 cattle, and 200,000 camels (for which Sudan is particularly famous). One-third of the animal stock on the Gezira Scheme, about 300,000 in total, was purchased from local nomadic and semi-nomadic herds of the Kenana, a subtype of the short-horned Zebu, known for their quality milk and beef. The purchased cattle and sheep were distributed to farmers who had no livestock. This was done in order to make full use of the annual crop residues of about 3,130,361 tons. The residues are mixed with fodder produced through crop rotation farming methods.

The organizational structure

The huge complex is under one centralized management. The board of directors is made up of a chairman and 20 members, half of whom are tenants and the others represent different organizations. The Scheme is divided into 18 administrative units, each of which is subdivided into further blocks, making 109 in total. This corresponds to 1,055 villages, in which the 112,000 families of the tenant farmers live. The tenants pay for use of land and water, and are provided with agricultural services, inputs at cost, technical and administrative supervision. The tenants pay 4% of the gross returns of cotton, which are allocated as follows: 2% for social development, 1% for local government councils, and 1% for the tenants' reserve fund. The net proceeds go to the tenants.

Among the services provided centrally are fertilizers, about 100,000 tons of which are imported per season; insecticides, herbicides, jute sacks, spare parts for vehicles, telecommunications, and an internal light-railway network. The Gezira Light Railways has 1,300 km of rail lines all over the Scheme, and transports inputs to the field, and outputs to the ginneries and warehousing facilities. Spraying of pesticides is done with 35-40 aircraft and 200-250 tractors, from the private sector.

As the board members stressed, with further construction of dams, more water for irrigation will be made available, as well as energy. Plans are afoot to increase the production of Gezira Scheme by 6-10% per year, to expand the area to one and a half times its current size, over time. The Gezira Scheme now produces 60% of total Sudanese agricultural production. Efforts are under way to settle the large nomad population of herdsmen, particularly in the west and south, by digging wells to provide for stable water supplies, and setting up housing settlements, with social services including education.

For the members of the U.S. delegation visiting Sudan, seeing Gezira was especially important, because it demonstrates the fact that, given the means, Sudan can produce all the food it requires.

No slavery found in Nuba Mountains

by Lawrence Freeman

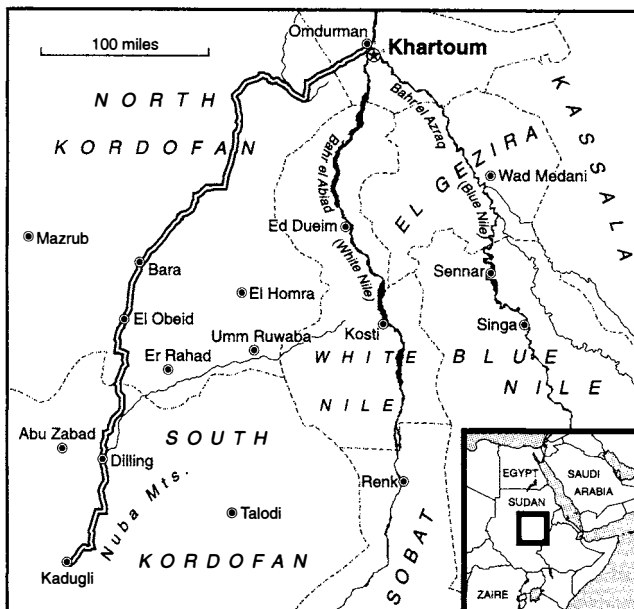
A delegation of elected officials from the United States, organized by the Schiller Institute, visited the Nuba Mountains, during a week-long stay in Sudan. Benjamin Swan and Thomas Jackson, members of the Massachusetts and Alabama state legislatures, respectively, accompanied by this author, traveled there on Friday, Sept. 20. The importance of this two-day excursion to southern Sudan cannot be overstated. Western media outlets, especially in the United States and Great Britain, along with Amnesty International and Baroness Caroline Cox's Christian Solidarity International, have written extensively on the Nuba Mountains, alleging that the so-called northern Muslims, supported by the Khartoum government, have massacred tens of thousands of tribal people there. While press outlets around the world have been filled with these stories of alleged "ethnic cleansing," the Schiller Institute delegation was shocked to learn that no one from any of these agencies has actually visited the area in the recent period, including Amnesty International, which has been the most outrageous in its lies against the government concerning this region. Thus, this visit by Swan and Jackson, coordinated by the Schiller Institute, was the first by such a high-level delegation from the United States to visit this remote area, to meet personally with people and examine the situation firsthand.

A rugged journey

The journey started when we assembled in the lobby of the Hilton Hotel in Khartoum at 5 a.m. on Friday, to begin our more than 1,000-kilometer trip south into the interior of Sudan. A relatively new Toyota Land Cruiser was rented the night before, to carry us over the rough terrain, in what turned out to be 11 hours of driving each way. After provisions of food and water were loaded into a second, less-equipped Land Cruiser, along with several aides, we headed out of Khartoum in the dark at 5:30 a.m.

The two vehicles traveled from Khartoum state into Northern Kordofan state on a relatively decent road for six hours, not counting a break for food and a slight delay caused by misjudging the fuel supply of the second vehicle. The land was flat, with little vegetation except for some small bushes, which manage to survive the extreme heat and lack of water. The changeless scenery was occasionally broken

Route of the Schiller Institute delegation



up by a small herd of cattle or goats, cared for by the nomadic tribesmen who populate the area. At around 2 p.m., we arrived at El Obeid, the capital of Northern Kordofan state, and the capital of the old Kordofan state before it was subdivided into three states. There we were met by the acting governor of the state, the agricultural minister of Southern Kordofan state, members of the state assembly, and other officials. We were treated to a delicious feast. Our second vehicle, which had developed some problems, was exchanged for another one. We left El Obeid after 4 p.m. to begin the second leg of our trip, which none of the delegation was physically prepared for.

As we continued to travel south from Northern Kordofan into Southern Kordofan state, the climate and geography changed into a region that was lush with vegetation, displaying the enormous agricultural potential of the state.

One road in

There is only one road into and out of the Nuba Mountains, if one can call it a road. Due to the heavy rains and terrible lack of infrastructure, the next portion of our journey consisted of navigating our way over hundreds of kilometers of unpaved terrain, filled with gigantic pot holes, stretches of dirt road, and, at times, nearly impassable conditions, which forced us to drive as much as possible off the road in the sand and grass. The passengers spent most of the time off their seats, bouncing up and down, while the vibrations from the road, or non-road, shook the entire car so violently, that the vehicle was permanently damaged. Once we realized that we could not

navigate this road in the dark, we decided to spend the night at the small town of Dilling. We got up at 4 a.m. to finish the second leg of this portion of the trip, in an attempt to get to the Nuba Mountains as early as possible in the morning, since we still expected to get back to Khartoum by early Saturday evening.

At approximately 7:30 a.m., our delegation finally reached our destination, Kadugli, the capital of Southern Kordofan state in the heart of the Nuba Mountains. We were met by the Deputy Wali (equivalent of deputy governor), the deputy chairman of the state assembly, the police chief, religious leaders, members of the state assembly, the local head of the military for the area, and others, and were invited by the town leaders to sit down and relax under a huge mango tree. We happily agreed, while we drank juice and tea.

After a hearty breakfast, we were escorted to a meeting hall filled with about 75 tribal (elected) chiefs, who represented virtually all the tribes that lived in the area, who had assembled there to tell us about the Nuba Mountains. Everyone was very appreciative of the importance that we placed on visiting the Nuba Mountains, by making this difficult journey.

Peace is the priority

After a few remarks by Ben Swan on behalf of the Schiller Institute delegation, Deputy Wali H.R. Anned read a prepared statement giving us an overview of Southern Kordofan, which is a new state formed in 1994, with a population of 1.3 million people and 82,000 square kilometers. It is rich in agriculture, livestock, and forestry, and has abundant rainfall, a large number of nomadic tribes, 750 local districts, 30 local governments, and an elected state assembly. He said that for 500 years, all the people in the area had lived in harmony together, and that the most important issue for everyone was how to bring about peace, because without peace there will be no development. He said that all the tribes and groups are working together for peace.

Next, Deputy Chairman of the State Assembly M.S. Rohamtalla spoke, and reiterated that the priority is peace. He said that the federal system is the key to peace, allowing people to govern themselves, with each state having its own social identity. The rebels who signed the peace agreement with the government, he said, have come back to the Nuba Mountains to convince people of the importance of achieving peace. He added that the sanctions by the United States and the United Nations are stumbling blocks toward peace, and that all the allegations against Sudan were initiated when Sudan started to act like a sovereign nation. He said that all the allegations brought up against Sudan, were intended to stop Sudan's economic development and development of its people. We have very dark Arabs and light black Nubans, he said, and those opposed to Sudan have tried to make "us a big zoo of humans."



Members of the Schiller Institute delegation meet with refugees from the Nuba Mountains who are members of the Sudanese Church of Christ, outside a Coptic church in Kadugli. Kneeling in front are several local leaders.

A humorous intervention

The Emir of Kadugli, whose family historically owned the land, made a humorous intervention into the meeting. He called six people from the hall to the front of the room and asked the Americans to pick out who was Nuban and who was Arab. When none of us could, everyone in the room broke out laughing at our expense; but one familiar with the area could make distinctions based on the differences in their dress. So the Emir summoned another eight chiefs, all dressed traditionally with robes and turbans, to the front of the room, and asked us to pick out the Arabs and the Nubans. We again were incapable of doing so. The obvious question asked was, if one can't distinguish between Arabs and Nubans, how can there be slavery by the Arabs and how could one implement "ethnic cleansing"? One Nuban chief asked, "Why doesn't the United States help develop the Nuba Mountains, instead of attacking Sudan?" At the conclusion of the meeting, the Schiller Institute was asked if we could invite two chiefs from the Nuba Mountains, one Arab and one Nuban, to come to the United States to tell the truth about their area.

After we left the meeting hall, we were taken on a quick tour of the central market place, and visited a Catholic church. One of the happier moments was when we visited the Coptic church and were greeted by a crowd of refugees

(mostly children) who belonged to the Sudanese Church of Christ, who were singing and dancing to celebrate our arrival. After a short service by the priest, we made our way to the outskirts of Kadugli to begin our journey back to Khartoum.

As we drove, we saw people going about their work, children playing and swimming, herdsman taking care of their animals—all without a trace of fear of oppression or slavery. Many asked us to see their homes and visit with them, but due to severe time constraints we were unable to oblige. All three of us in the Schiller Institute delegation concurred that we had seen not even the slightest hint of slavery or discrimination. As Ben Swan later remarked, when you looked in their eyes, you could see and feel that they were telling the truth.

We left the Nuba Mountains with an escort at approximately 12 noon, to begin our long journey back to Khartoum. After losing another vehicle because of the rough road conditions, and a couple of stops along the road for tea, we arrived back in our hotel at 1:30 a.m. to the cheers of the employees in the hotel lobby. Though we had traveled over 2,000 kilometers in 44 hours, all of us considered it well worth the trip. The impressions of visiting with the people of the Nuba Mountains will be with us for the rest of our lives. Contrary to all the lies, slanders, and volumes of black propaganda, we now know the truth.