



## Institute Fact-Finding in Sudan

On the initiative of the Schiller Institute, a delegation of four U.S. elected officials visited Sudan Sept. 13-23, to investigate allegations of government supported slavery. The delegation consisted of former Congressman James Mann of South Carolina; Assistant Speaker Pro Tem of the State Legislature of Arkansas Benjamin McGee; Member of the State Legislature of Massachusetts Ben Swan; and Member of the State Legislature of Alabama Thomas Jackson. They were accompanied by Lawrence Freeman and Muriel Mirak Weissbach, both of the Schiller Institute.

The delegation was received by Sudanese officials at the state and federal level, as well as by religious leaders, representatives of leading economic sectors, and the press. Among them were the leaders of the National Assembly (Parliament); its President, Dr. Hassan Turabi; Deputy Speaker Shiddo; the chairman of the Foreign Parliamentary Relations Commission, Dr. Mohamed Shakir Alsarraj; the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Einayet Abdel Hameed; the chairman of the Peace Committee, Juang Tuoj Nyoab; the Deputy Chairman of the Human Rights Committee, the Rev. Adi Ambrose, and many leading parliamentarians. The delegation was also received by the Secretary General of the National Congress, the Secretary General of the Council for International People's Friendship, the Minister of Justice, and the President of the Sudanese American Friendship Association.

On the state level, the delegation was received by the chairman of Khartoum State Legislative Council, along with many committee chairmen, and the Minister of Agriculture of South Kordofan State.

Since the central purpose of the visit was to probe allegations regarding slavery in Sudan, the elected officials engaged in lengthy sessions with groups of Sudanese officials, posing direct questions on the matter. Sudanese officials detailed how, following United Nations allegations in late 1995, they had sent investigating teams to the areas where such practices were alleged. UN Special Rapporteur Gaspar Biro, they related, had been pleased with the team's findings, issued Aug. 15; they showed no cases of slavery in the Nuba Mountains.

### Visit to Nuba Mountains

The U.S. delegation followed up its discussions in Khartoum with federal and state officials, by going to the Nuba Mountains to see the situation with their own eyes. The Nuba Mountains are the area where, according to Amnesty International, the Society for Endangered Peoples, and Christian Solidarity International, the Sudanese "Arab" government has practiced ethnic cleansing against the Nubas.

The Schiller Institute delegation received exhaustive reports from the Kordofan State Governor, the Agriculture Minister, State Assembly members, local authorities, and the tribal chiefs in Kadugli. They were briefed as well by



**Top left:** In Kadulgi, Rep. Thomas Jackson, Lawrence Freeman, and Rep. Ben Swan (left to right) meet with refugees from the Nuba mountains. **Top right:** In Khartoum (clockwise around table), Reps. Swan, Jackson, and Benjamin McGee meet with Minister of Justice H.E. Abdel Baset Sabdarat, ministry officials, and Rev. Adi S. Ambrose, deputy chairman of the Human Rights Committee. **Bottom:** Reps. McGee and Swan meet with Dr. Hassan Turabai, President of the National Assembly.

the representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, the Coptic Church, and the Sudanese Church of Christ.

As Rep. Ben Swan told a Sudanese reporter in an interview on returning to the capital, not only were the reports given them by the local people credible, but the entire social atmosphere, with children freely roaming the fields, swimming in the river, and playing, made clear that there was no fear of abduction among the local population. Representative Jackson told the same reporter that he found it "incredible" that, with all the massive press campaigns about slavery, "No one has ever gone there."