



Africa and the World By Akbar Muhammad

AN ATTEMPT FOILED 103 BLACK YOUNG CHILDREN WERE TO BE SOLD INTO SLAVERY

I've just returned from Sudan where I have learned more of the horrifying details about a modern day French Slave Trade of children in Africa. An NGO called Zoe's Ark was busted trying to transport 103 children from Chad and Darfur. They were in the process of kidnapping these children and taking them to France to be sold into slavery at the cost of \$3,400 per child. These modern day slave traders were operating under the deceptive pretense that these children were orphans and their parents were killed in the Darfur conflict.

Both the European and American press have avoided using the "S" word, Slavery in their reporting by downplaying the act as "child trafficking" instead of calling it what it is pure and simple Slavery. The reports are that these children were headed to France, Belgium and even as far away as America. The French and Belgium governments have been fighting a growing number of pedophile rings for years and America is not far behind.

Zoe's Ark conspiracy was reported to the Chadian authority by a hired driver who overheard a disturbing conversation between the children. As part of the cover up when transporting these children these modern day slave traders placed bandages and intravenous into some of the children's arms to make it appear that they were in need of medical treatment. Because of the report given by the driver, the Chadian authorities were able to intervene before the slave traders could put the children on a chartered plane from Spain called GIRjet headed for France. The Chadian and Sudanese investigation have revealed that many of the parents of these children were still alive, some parents

believed that their children were going to attend school somewhere in Chad and other parents have yet to be identified. A Sudanese humanitarian group is circulating a poster with the pictures of all 103 children (21 girls and 82 boys) in an attempt to find the missing parents or relatives. When I looked at the pictures of these young kids all under 10 years old, I knew there was more to this story than meets the eye and there were a host of burning questions that needed to be answered.

Let me start by asking where is "Save Darfur" on this tragedy. A full page ad in the New York Times paid for by the "Save Darfur Coalition" reads "Will the Peace Keepers find them before the Janjaweed do?" The ad shows children who are of the same age of those 103 children from Darfur. The "Save Darfur" Coalition should be challenged to run an ad that reads "Will the Peace keepers find them before the French Slave Traders do". The next troublesome area in this investigation is reminiscent of the slave trade in the Western Hemisphere. Review of the tapes that were confiscated by the Chadian officials reveal that the staff of Zoe's Ark attempted to change the names of the children and give them European names in place of their African names. Anyone who saw Roots remember the scene when the slave owner beat Kunta Kinte until he denied his name and accepted Toby. We can identify these 103 children but how many more were taken before Zoe's Ark was busted. How could Zoe's Ark bring 103 children into France without a passport, travel documents or refuge cards, was Immigration and Customs involved in this conspiracy?

Further and more puzzling is the French President, Nicolas Sarkovy decision to personally fly to Chad and pressure the Chadian President, Idriss Deby to release all seventeen. News reports indicate that he was able to get some freed while others remain to face charges.

To receive a copy of the 103 children or to send comments or questions email Africanliteracy@msn.com