

Religious Persecution in Sudan

by Mel Middleton

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It has been said that more Christians have been martyred in this century alone, than in the previous nineteen centuries combined. Seldom is this attack against Christianity as salient as in the country of Sudan. Yet it is not only the Christians who are suffering. The net has widened to include all who oppose the extremist religious ideology of the ruling National Islamic Front - including moderate, and tolerant Moslems. Indeed most Muslims in Sudan find the activities of the NIF government abhorrent, and contrary to the true teachings of Islam.

The track record of the current government in Sudan provides compelling evidence of a systematic, determined campaign of religious persecution against opponents of Islamic extremism. This is a campaign of gross human rights violations which is widespread, and carried out at the orders of top government officials.

It is a campaign which fits the definition of GENOCIDE as set out in the 1948 Genocide Convention following World War 2. Just as Hitler had his "final solution", so do the Islamic extremists have their "final solution" to the "southern problem". (See resource materials listed at the end of this report)

2.0 THE CRISIS IN SUDAN

Sudan is a country of vast resources. It has long been seen by the Arab world as its future breadbasket. There are those who believe that Sudan, if properly developed, could feed all of Africa. Along with agricultural wealth, Sudan has vast oil reserves, chromium, uranium, gold, timber, and cattle. The problems in Sudan are NOT because the land cannot produce wealth.

Yet last year, an estimated 200,000 southern Sudanese - mostly southern Christians - died in a preventable and predictable man made famine. It was Stalin who said that "if one person dies, that is a tragedy; if a thousand people die, that is a statistic". Unfortunately, to the world community at large, those 200,000 people - all of whom had names, dreams, friends and families - are now little more than statistics.

Sudan is one of the most serious crisis in the world today. At present, there are over 4 million displaced people; a brutal civil war which targets a civilian population, and a famine which is affecting an estimated 2.6 million people. But it is primarily the "African Sudanese" in the south, (who differ significantly from the "Arab Sudanese" in the north by race, culture, skin colour and often religion), who are suffering the most.

Sudan is a country where human rights are violated regularly, political freedoms are virtually non existent, and power has been concentrated in the hands of an oligarchy of